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Drawn out

To form a True Christian's Heart, and Practice.

In Two Parts.

LONDON,

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THE

Radical Believer:

OR THE

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OF THE

Apollo Club.

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THE Practical Believer.

The First Part.

OF THE
NATURE and CERTAINTY
OF
Christian Faith,
AND
The Knowledge of God:
OR, AN
Explication of the Divine Attributes, and Providence.

Febr. 28. 1687. *Imprimatur Liber cui Titulus*, The Practical Believer, *&c. Guil. Needham RR. in Christo P. ac D. D. Wilhelmo Archiep. Cant. à Sacr. Domest.*

London, Printed for *Robert Kettlewell*, and are to be Sold by the Booksellers of *London* and *Westminster*. 1688.

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THE PREFACE.

Reader,

I Here preſent thee with a Diſcourſe upon the Holy Chriſtian Faith: which as we all profeſs ſeriouſly to believe; ſo ſhould we carefully endeavour to anſwer, and adorn, with an Holy and Chriſtian Practice. In this, I have endeavoured to give ſuch accounts of Almighty God, as may encourage all good Men to love and ſerve him; and deter all evil Men, from preſuming on his Favour, or

provoking his Diſpleaſure. I have drawn out the conſideration of his Providence, into the uſual caſes and occurrences, and ſhown how we may live upon it, and give our ſelves the true comfort and advantage thereof, in all events and tranſactions. And all the other Articles of the Creed, I have endeavoured to ſet off in ſuch particulars, as we are moſt concerned to know, and which may give them the greateſt life, and power with us. In the whole, I have aim'd to lay before thee the ſumm of Chriſtian Doctrine, that in an Age, which abounds with unchriſtian falſhoods, we may keep ſtedfaſt in Chriſtian Truths: and that among all the Truths of Chriſtianity, we may lay out our Care and Zeal on thoſe, which

which are moſt important, and worthy of all acceptance.

My great deſign in this Treatiſe, is to lend what help I am able, to thoſe, that ſincerely deſire, and ſeriouſly ſet themſelves to live as they believe, and to make Faith a Governing Grace: ſhowing how we may ſerve our ſelves of it, and give up our Souls to be ordered and directed by it, in all our manifold, and moſt important caſes and concerns. And looking all along at this mark, in paſſing through all the *Articles of the Creed*, I have not ſought to fill up a Book, by inſerting all that may be truly, or pertinently ſaid: But have applied my ſelf to inſtruct thee, in ſuch, as I thought the leading, and governing Noti-

ons; to inculcate those, which seem to me the most concerning, and powerful Truths; to set off such particulars about them, as seem fittest to affect us, or lie neareſt unto Practice; and to note wherein we are to follow and attend to them, in the course, and various exigencies of our lives. And hoping this may prove beneficial to the instruction, and use of plain Christians, who have neither leisure to peruse, nor capacity to retain larger Volumes; I have endeavoured to treat of these things with convenient brevity. But withal to comprize so much, not only of necessary, but profitable Doctrine, as may be sufficient to any Man's guidance and encouragement, who will set himself diligently to learn, and walk in the light of it. I am

I am not without hopes, that this Diſcourſe may, in ſome degree or other, ſerve the end, for which it is ſincerely ſent abroad, *viz.* of doing ſome honour and ſervice to the ever Bleſſed Trinity, and making an admirable, and moſt efficacious Faith, more lively and powerful in ſome, that profeſs it. And if thou, good Reader, ſhalt reap any benefit by it, as thou wilt not fail to give God the praiſe, for ſuiting and ſupplying thy neceſſity, by the weakneſs of any he employs: ſo one thing I heartily requeſt of thee, which is all the return, that in this World I either expect, or deſire, that thou wilt thus far remember the poor inſtrument of thy Mercy, as in the fervency of

thy Devotion, to put up one Prayer to our common Father, for his Salvation, who with a very ready and willing mind, has taken all this pains to promote thine.

THE

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Repentance in conjunction. This Faith with its ſuitable effects, was that which juſtified the Old Teſtament *Worthies. And is to juſtifie all good Chriſtians. When S.* Paul *oppoſes juſtifying-Faith to the Deeds of the Law, he ſpeaks of the Deeds of the* Jewiſh *Law. That which fits Faith for theſe effects, and diſtinguiſhes the Faith of Saints and Sinners, is, Firſt, The ſincerity of it. Secondly, Its ſtrength and firmneſs. This conſiſts in its being aſſured. And honeſt, or ſeated in one that makes conſcience to keep his word. And reſolute. In what ſenſe Faith may be called an act of Recumbency, or leaning and rolling on Chriſt for Salvation. And the hand, to receive and apply him. 'Tis no part of Faith to believe our ſins are pardon'd, nor of infidelity to doubt of it. Of the innocence many times of ſuch doubts. And of ſome good Mens confidence of their own forgiveneſs.* p. 1

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That Jeſus is the Chriſt from Ancient Prophecies.

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general expectation of him at that time. His coming not put off beyond the time appointed, for the ſins of the People. An account, why the Jews, *who read theſe clear Notes of the time in their own Prophets, are not convinced by them.* Secondly, *Others aſſign many peculiar, and viſible Notes, whereby he may be demonſtratively pointed out from all other Men. As,* 1. *His being born of a Virgin. This in ſome ſenſe ſpoken of a Virgin of that time, but principally of Meſſiah, and then only fully accompliſhed, when* Jeſus *came. This cleared from exceptions.* 2. *His having the Spirit of Miracles, reſting on him.* 3. *His Death, with the particular manner, and circumſtances of it. And his returning to Life again.* 4. *His putting an end to the* Jewiſh *Sacrifices and* Moſaick *Covenant, and bringing in a New one, and a better, to ſupply its defects.* 5. *His erecting an Univerſal Empire, and appearing as a mighty King. This not a Secular, but Spiritual Kingdom.* 6. *His converting the Heathen World, from their Idol-worſhip.* Jeſus *ſilenced the Oracles, and caſt the impure Spirits out of their Temples. This an Argument for him, not only as accompliſhing a Prediction, but alſo as 'tis plainly a Divine thing. The Prophecies of an Univerſal Probity, and Peace under Meſſiah, cleared up, by an account both of their meaning, and accompliſhment. The fore-cited Prophecies underſtood of Meſſiah by the Ancient* Jews, *though denied by ſome later in hatred to our* Jeſus. p. 45.

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The Knowledge of God: or, an Explication of the Divine Attributes, and Providence.

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Notions

Notions of it. In what things it chiefly conſiſts. Of God's Juſtice, or Righteouſneſs, *This ſhown in giving Righteous Laws. And paſſing Righteous Judgments according to them, without reſpect of Perſons. His Punitive Juſtice cleared from miſplacing puniſhments, in puniſhing one for another's ſins. And from miſproportioning them, in allotting eternal puniſhments, to momentany ſins. Some falſe aſperſions on this juſt God wiped off. Of God's* Preſence in all places. *The effect of this. Of his* Faithfulneſs. *This ſhown by inviolable performance of his Promiſes: And interpreting them without evaſion, or ſecret reſerve, according to their plain meanings. And by conſtant adherence to his Friends and Faithful Servants: which is no encouragement for any to return to their former ſins. Of God's* Wiſdom. *This ſhown in ſetting a juſt rate and eſtimate on all things; ſo that he is neither gained, nor loſt by worthleſs ſervices. In diſcerning the juſt power and force of all Means, and ſucceſs of all Methods; which ſhould beget the greateſt Reverence for all his Ordinances. In ſeeing the beſt times, and ſeaſons, for every purpoſe: ſo that we muſt never think any Deliverance too long delayed, or Affliction too faſt haſtened. No reaſon to pretend to the Love of God, without loving, and imitating theſe Divine Excellencies.* p. 143

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CHAP. II.

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Of God's Almightineſs.

God's Almightineſs implies, 1. *God's Might and Strength to effect all things,* viz. *all that are the object of any Power. And that are not repugnant to his own Nature. The exerting this Power creates God no labour. He can do whatſoever any things of the World can do. This an encouragement to all generous Enterprizes. And to build on Providence, eſpecially where we have a Promiſe. The value and acceptance of this truſt, in a ſeemingly moſt improbable caſe. And whatſoever any things of the World are inclined, or wont to do, he can hinder them from doing. This alſo a ground of truſt in God. And to keep us in any diſtreſs, from flying to unlawful aids. How God will uſe this Power.* 2. *His Sovereignty and Power, to command, and order all things. This includes,* 1. *Empire, as a Sovereign Ruler. What things God may command. The unalterableneſs of ſome commands.* 2. *Dominion, as a Sovereign Proprietor. In what caſes God allots good and ill, out of his Power of Prerogative, not according to Mens pre-diſpoſitions. Where he diſpenſes Arbitrarily, he doth it always moſt Wiſely, and Reaſonably. Saving Grace he allots, not in way of Arbitrary Prerogative, but according to Covenant Rules. And Hea-*

ven

ven and Hell, in way of Legal Trials. A brief account of the Rectitude of God's Nature, which limits his Sovereign Will, from the Scriptures. This Sovereign Lord and Proprietor an All-sufficient, so no selfish Being. Several good uses of God's Sovereign Dominion. God's Majesty and Almightiness, must beget fear and reverence. p. 232

ER-

ERRATA.

PAG. 19. lin. 12. for *accepted*, read *was accepted*. p. 34. l. 29. for *And half Faith* r. *An half Faith*. p. 36. l. 13. for *such as do* r. *such do*. p. 41. l. 1. for *of sufficiency* r. *of the sufficiency*. p. 70. l. 24. for *men in Bethlehem*, r. *men of Bethlehem*. p. 113. l. 17. for *do danger*, r. *no danger*. p. 150. l. 15. for *this peerless Majesty*, r. *his peerless Majesty*. p. 154. l. 7. for *in wickedness contracting*, r. *in wickedly contracting*.

The

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PART I.

Of the Nature, and Certainty of Christian Faith, &c.

CHAP. I.

Of Christian Faith.

The Contents.

What is meant by Faith in Christ. When this ſuitably affects us, it juſtifies, or avails to Righteouſneſs. An account of ſeveral particulars of Chriſtian Belief, with the reſpective Affections, and Practices, that are ſuitable to them. All theſe are reaſonably to be expected from them, though they do not follow, where Men will act inconſiſtently to their Principles, and againſt Reaſon. Faith with its ſuitable effects, the ſame as Faith and Repentance. On this account ſuch effects aſcribed to it, when alone, as are due only to it and Repentance in conjunction. This Faith with its ſuitable effects, was that which juſtified the

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Queſtion. SInce Men are made to live for ever, and have Souls capable of Eternal Salvation, What muſt they do to ſave them?

Anſwer. Believe in Chriſt, and *repent*. For Faith, and Obedience, which, where Men have ſinn'd before, is call'd Repentance, are the conditions of Salvation.

Queſt. Is Faith in *Chriſt* one thing neceſſary to Salvation?

Anſ. Yes. *He that heareth my word*, ſays our Saviour, *is paſſed from death unto life, and ſhall not come into condemnation*, John 5. 24. *He that believeth the Goſpel, and is baptized, ſhall*

ſhall be ſaved; and he that believeth not, ſhall be damned, Mark 16. 16.

Queſt. Will all Faith ſave Men?

Anſ. No; for *the Devils* themſelves *believe*, ſays S. *James*, Jam. 2. 19. But the ſaving Faith, is only that which ſuitably affects us, and works Repentance: Repentance, as well as Faith, being neceſſary to Eternal Happineſs.

Queſt. Since Faith is in it ſelf one part of the condition of our Happineſs, and inſtrumental alſo to work the Reſt, it is neceſſary to underſtand well what it is, and wherein a ſaving Faith differs from other ſorts of Faith. Pray what is meant by *Faith in Chriſt?*

Anſ. In general, it is *the believing all, that is declared to us by Chriſt*: and ſometimes more particularly *ſome things, that are declared of him.* The *believing what is ſaid by him*, is called Faith in *Chriſt*, as his Authority and Credit is the Ground, and Reaſon of our Belief: and the *believing things ſaid of him*, as he himſelf is the object of it. And when this belief ſuitably affects us, and we ſo reſolve, and practiſe thereupon, as may be reaſonably expected from Perſons under ſuch Perſuaſions, then is it imputed to us for Righteouſneſs.

Queſt. Is Faith in *Chriſt*, believing all that is declared to us by *Chriſt*, or a giving truſt and credit to his Word?

Anſ. Yes, and ſo the Scriptures intimate, when they call it *faith* † *of Chriſt*, that is, of his

† Gal. 2. 20. Phil. 3. 9.

his Teaching and Directing; and, as it is
*Act. 18. 8. ſometimes in the Original, *faith * to Chriſt*,
† Mar. 1. 15. & Phil. 1. 27. that is, to him teſtifying and declaring; and Faith or *belief of the* † *Goſpel*, and *of the* * *truth*, the Goſpel being that Word of
* 2 Theſſ. 2. 13. truth, which, on his Credit and Authority,
Heb. 10. 26. he teſtifies and declares to us. Beſides,
† Joh. 12. 47, 48. Faith or Belief in *Chriſt*, is expreſſed in Scripture by theſe ſeveral Phraſes, of † *hearing*
*Act. 11. 1. *and receiving the word of Chriſt*, of * *receiving*
† Jo. 1. 12. *the word of God*, of † *receiving Chriſt*, of * *re-*
* Jo. 3. 33. *ceiving the teſtimony of Chriſt*, of † *coming un-*
† Jo 6. 35, 37, 64, 65. *to Chriſt*. All which, as is evident from the places alledged, being made only ſo many other words for believing, ſhow plainly that Faith or Belief, is the crediting of his Word, and aſſenting to thoſe things, that are declared by him. Which declarations, for their ſurer derivation to After-times, were all put in Writing by his Holy *Apoſtles* and *Evangeliſts* before their Deaths, and are all contain'd in the *Holy Scriptures*.

Queſt. Indeed, if Faith in *Chriſt* be a *belief of Chriſt's word*, it plainly implies *hearing*, and *receiving it*; and that Word being ſent down to us by him from *God*, receiving it, is a *receiving the word of God*; and believing it on *Chriſt*'s Authority, is *receiving his teſtimony*. But how do the two other Phraſes, of *receiving Chriſt*, and *coming unto Chriſt*, ſhew the Faith they denote to be a belief of his Word?

Anſ.

Anſ. To *receive one*, notes different things, as it is apply'd to different caſes. Men receive a Gueſt, when they entertain him in their Houſes; a Ruler, when they become his ſubjects; a Friend, when they admit him to intimacies; but a Prophet and Teacher, under which notion *Chriſt* claims belief, when they *credit his Doctrine and Meſſage.* And becauſe they who thus believ'd him, came perſonally to attend and learn of him, and aſſociated themſelves with him, as they that retain'd to, and followed him; therefore was this belief of him, in a literal ſenſe, *a coming to him.*

Queſt. Doth Faith in *Chriſt* ſignifie alſo in Scripture, the believing ſome things concerning *Chriſt?*

Anſ. Yes, and thoſe too ſuch things, as are apt to beget truſt, and confidence in him. For ſo, though *the Devils* know and *believe* the truth of all *Chriſt* has declared, yet S. *James* ſays they want the right Faith, becauſe they only *tremble* at it, and cannot hope in the leaſt, that ever he will do them any good, *Jam.* 2. 19.

Queſt. What are we thus particularly to believe concerning *Chriſt?*

Anſ. Not only in the general, That *he is the Son of God*, and *the Chriſt* or Meſſiah, for profeſſing whereof S. *Peter* was pronounced *Bleſſed*, Mat. 16. 16, 17. but alſo particularly, to believe that he *died for our ſins*, to reconcile us unto God by his Death, whence it is eſpecially called *faith in his blood*, Ro. 3. 25.

That

That he *roſe again from the dead*, which whoſo *believes in his heart*, ſays S. *Paul*, *ſhall be ſaved*, Rom. 10. 9. And that he is now aſcended into Heaven, and ſeated on the right Hand of God, there to intercede and mediate for us, till at laſt he ſhall come again to judge the World, and eternally reward or puniſh all, according as their lives have been good or bad.

Queſt. So that I perceive *Faith in Chriſt*, is our believing the Goſpel, and all things contained therein, concerning God, our Selves, or another World, upon *Chriſt*'s Authority. And particularly, believing what he therein declares concerning his being the *Chriſt* and Son of God, who died, roſe again, aſcended to God's right Hand, and ſhall return again to judge the World, as is alſo expreſſed in the *Creed*. And that for the ſake of his death to expiate ſins, God will be reconciled to Sinners upon their true Repentance?

Anſ. Yes, this is the true Faith in *Chriſt*, upon profeſſion whereof the *Apoſtles* at firſt enter'd Men as *Diſciples*, S. *Peter* without more ado *Baptizing the three thouſand that gladly receiv'd the Word*, wherein he had declared to them theſe very things, *Act.* 2. 41. And the Chriſtian Church ever ſince admitting them to *Baptiſm*, upon their profeſſing Faith of the *Apoſtles Creed*, which contains the ſame particulars.

Queſt.

Queſt. By this I perceive what Faith in *Chriſt* is. Pray what wants this to make it ſaving and available unto Righteouſneſs?

Anſ. Only that it ſuitably affect us, or work in us ſuch Godly Affections, Purpoſes, and Practices, as may juſtly be expected from Men of ſuch perſuaſions.

Queſt. Pray what are theſe ſuitable affections?

Anſ. They will beſt appear, by running over briefly ſome of the chief of thoſe particulars, which we believe on the word of *Chriſt*, and which are to produce them in us.

Queſt. We believe that *God is our Father*, who at firſt made us, and ſtill preſerves, and provides for us, with Paternal care and tenderneſs. How muſt this affect us?

Anſ. With Love, Honour, and dutiful Obedience. *If I be a Father, where is my honour?* Mal. 1. 6.

Queſt. We believe him to be infinite in Juſtice, and Almighty in Power, able, and ready as to conſer whatſoever is deſirable on thoſe that fear, ſo to inflict whatſoever is dreadful on thoſe that affront him. What ſhould this beget in us?

Anſ. Reverence, and *godly fear. Fear him, who when he hath killed, hath Power to caſt both Body and Soul into Hell, yea, I ſay unto you fear him*, Luk. 12. 5. & Matth. 10. 28.

Queſt. We believe him to be perfectly Righteous, that is, moſt Holy, and Juſt, and True, and Faithful, and Merciful, and Patient,

Patient, and pleaſed only with what is ſo. How ought we in reaſon, to be influenced by this belief?

Anſ. Made Holy, and Righteous as he is, that ſo we may be like him the Supreme Object of all imitation, and find favour in his Eyes. *If we know that he is Righteous, we know that every one that doth Righteouſneſs, is born of him*, 1 Jo. 2. 29.

Queſt. We believe his Providence orders all events. What ſhould we do upon this?

Anſ. Be content under all that happens, and ſay, as the Holy *Pſalmiſt*, *I opened not my mouth, becauſe thou didſt it*, Pſal. 39. 9. or, as old *Eli*, *It is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth him good*, 1 Sam. 3. 18.

Queſt. We believe, that this Providence *will never leave, nor forſake* thoſe that fear God, *Heb.* 13. 5. that it will make all the evil they meet with here, *to work for their good*, Rom. 8. 28. That *the deſire of the Righteous ſhall be granted*, Prov. 10. 24. *That they ſhall not want any good thing*, Pſal. 34. 10. And that, when they *ſeek firſt the kingdom of God, all other things ſhall be added* to them, without their being *ſolicitous* about them, *Matth.* 6. 33, 34. What would one in reaſon expect, from Men ſo perſuaded?

Anſ. That they truſt in the living God, 1 Tim. 6. 17. that they lay aſide all diſtracting *ſolicitude*, and *thoughtfulneſs* for outward things, *Matth.* 6. 25, 31, 34. That they *be careful for nothing*, but making their caſe known to God,

God, *caſt all their care upon him, who careth for them*, Phil. 4. 6. & 1 Pet. 5, 7.

Queſt. We believe he will not forget his word, although the performance of it be long delaied, but remember it faithfully, and in due time give it effect. What ſhould this work in us?

Anſ. *Patience* and Perſeverance of Hope, whereof all *have need, that after they have done the will of God, they may receive the Promiſe:* It being God's way, for ſome time to exerciſe Mens Faith of a Promiſe, before he accompliſh it, *Heb.* 10, 36, 37.

Queſt. We believe he is able to fulfil it when it is moſt improbable, and unlike to take effect, there *being no word impoſſible with God*, Luk. 1. 37. and that he will do it. What ſhould be the effect of this?

Anſ. To beget in us a firm Faith, and unſhaken confidence in his Promiſe: ſuch as *Abraham*'s was, for having a *Child*, when both *He* and his *Wife* were *paſt Age* for Children; and of having a numerous Iſſue by him, when at Gods command he was juſt about to *ſlay* him, *Rom.* 4. 20, 21. & *Heb.* 11. 19.

Queſt. We believe, that for *Chriſt*'s ſake, God will give good things to thoſe, that ſeek to him for them, and that if *they ask, it ſhall be given*, Matth. 7. 7. What ſhould follow upon this opinion?

Anſ. Prayer and Devotion. So that whatſoever Temporal, or Spiritual Bleſſings Men ſtand in need of, they ſhould ſeek to God

God the Author, and by *Jesus Christ* the procurer of them.

Quest. We believe that *Jesus* is the Son of God, and the *Christ* that was to come into the World. What would any serious, and considerate Man do, that is so persuaded?

Ans. Confide in him, and worship and submit to him, as a most just Object of our Homage, Trust, and Adoration.

Quest. We believe this same *Jesus* to be our Lord. What should he in reason do, who believes and professes that?

Ans. Keep his Commandments, and observe his Orders. For *why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?* Luke 6.46.

Quest. We believe that he came down from Heaven in love to us, to restore us to God's Favour, and Eternal Happiness. What would any ingenuous Person do, that is convinced of this?

Ans. Love him most dearly that so loved us, and thank him most heartily, and intirely, for having done, and suffered so much for our sakes.

Quest. We believe the cause of his dying so painful and ignominious a Death upon the Cross, was not any ill that he had done himself, but only our sins, and that at last they will bring us to Eternal Death, unless we repent of them. What can be expected of all that have this persuasion?

Ans.

Anſ. Irreconcileably to hate ſin, and to repent and ſin no more, leſt they come to feel the ſame at laſt intolerably, and that too without all hopes of remedy, in their own Perſons. We muſt *die to ſin*, ſays the *Scripture*, ſince he *died for it*, Rom. 6. 6, 8, 11. And if *we judge* that *he died for us*, his *love*, as well as our own danger, will conſtrain us *not to live unto our ſelves, but unto him that died for us*, 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15.

Queſt. We believe that he is now in Heaven at God's right Hand to preſent our Prayers, and intercede for us, and procure whatſoever we ſtand in need of. What effect ought this to have upon us?

Anſ. Make us look up to him with affiance in his Patronage, and apply to God by him with confidence in all our diſtreſſes. *Having ſuch an high-prieſt now paſſed into the heavens*, ſays the *Apoſtle*, *let us come boldly unto the throne of grace*, Heb. 4. 14.

Queſt. We believe, that as by his Death he purchaſed, ſo in Heaven he is now taking up, and preparing Manſions of Eternal Bliſs, for all ſuch holy Souls, as, by purity of heart and life, are fit to partake of, and delight in them. What muſt every Man of this belief do, to be true to his own ſentiments?

Anſ. Purifie himſelf, that he may be meet to enjoy, and qualified to reliſh the immaculate pleaſures, of that pure, and ſpotleſs Place. *Every man, that hath this hope in him, purifies himſelf, even as he is pure*, 1 Jo. 3. 3.

Queſt. We believe, that at the *laſt day Chriſt will judge all men according to their deeds*, 2 Cor. 5. 10. Eternally rewarding all that are truly Pious, Humble, Temperate, Juſt, True, and Peaceable; and eternally condemning all that are otherwiſe. What ſhould every Perſon do in common care and prudence, that is fully perſuaded of this?

Anſ. Faithfully ſerve and fear God, who will call him to this ſtrict account. He ſhould *be ſober, and watch unto prayer*, 1 Pet. 4. 5, 7. and *be temperate in all things*, 1 Cor. 9. 25. and *owe nothing, but love, to any man*, Rom. 13. 8. and *follow peace with all men, and holineſs*; without which, no *man ſhall ſee the Lord*, Heb. 12. 14.

Queſt. We believe the Holy Ghoſt is ready to aſſiſt us in every good act, and help all, that will uſe his aid, to be as Holy, as God requires they ſhould be. What would all, that ſeriouſly attend to this belief, do upon it?

Anſ. Obey his motions, and concur with his aſſiſtances, and never wilfully do any thing, that will forfeit the aid and influence, of ſo deſireable, and Divine a Gueſt, as he is. *Have*, that is, uſe *Grace*, that *you may ſerve God acceptably*, Heb. 12. 28. *Work out your own ſalvation, for it is God that worketh in you*, Phil. 2. 12, 13. and *grieve not the Holy Spirit of God*, Eph. 4. 30.

Queſt. We believe the communion of Saints, which implies an obedient ſubmiſſion and adherence to our common Rulers,

lers, and particularly a communion in Prayers and Sacraments. What would God, or Men expect, from a Person of this belief?

Anſ. To keep the unity of the Church, and frequent the publick † Aſſemblies, where theſe Saints are to meet, and unite in all Divine Offices. † Heb. 10. 25.

Queſt. So that, to name no more, theſe Points of Belief already mentioned, if duly attended to, would influence and act on all ſerious embracers of them, into love of God, and Honour, and godly Fear, and make them reſt contented in all eſtates, and truſt God with all Futurities, and have affiance in him in the greateſt Difficulties, and ſhew patience and perſeverance under the moſt tedious Delays, and purifie their Hearts and Lives, and render them univerſally Righteous as God is, and keep them Holy, and Humble, and Temperate, and Juſt, and Peaceable, thereby to come off well at the Great Day of Accounts. It would cauſe them to love, honour, and obey their Saviour *Chriſt*, and repent truly of all their ſins, and put them upon Prayers and Devotions, and keep them in the unity of the Church, and the Publick Aſſemblies, and make them encourage the Grace of God, and joyn therewith their beſt endeavours, all which are only the forecited particulars.

Anſ. Yes, where a belief of theſe things is, theſe fruits may reaſonably be expected

from it. For they naturally follow on such apprehensions, and accordingly are ascribed to them, and intended to result from them in the Holy *Scriptures*.

Quest. And as it appears in these, so I suppose it might be made appear, how we are led on by some Points of Belief, to every other Point of Practice?

Ans. It might so, but I judge these to be abundantly enough.

Quest. But although all among us profess to believe these Principles, yet are few thus affected with them, or influenced thereby into these practices.

Ans. Too true, alas! But therein they act most unreasonably, and are false to their own persuasions. Whereas, if a Man has a real belief of these things, and will both attend or dwell upon it, and be true to it, following on whither it leads him; in its own natural tendency, and according to all reason, it would affect and influence him, as has been declared. From this Faith, such Fruits are reasonably to be expected; though where Men act out of reason, and either forget themselves, or, to gratifie some unlawful lusts, are wilfully false to their own opinions, no such things will follow it.

Quest. If Faith be such a fertile Grace, and so apt to usher in all others; though it be but one in the Root and Cause, yet in the Fruit and Effect it will be all Virtues.

Ans.

Anſ. Very right, and ſo it is. What in *Nature*, *Pleaſure* and *Pain* are among the *Paſſions*; that in *Religion*, *Faith* is among the *Graces*, viz. the Source, Root, and Groundwork of all the reſt, which are only its different expreſſions, according to its various Aſpects, as it looks ſeveral ways, and is converſant about ſeveral Objects. For as Pleaſure, ſimply offer'd and apprehended, begets Love; if offer'd as abſent, eſpecially as remote, it turns Deſire; if as attainable, chiefly when that attainment ſeems near, it becomes Hope; if as attainable ſurely, Confidence: and as Pain doth the like, with the Paſſions oppoſite: So Faith, as I have obſerv'd, when it is of God's Precepts, turns Obedience; when of his Threatnings, Fear and holy Awe; when of his Promiſes, Hope and Truſt; when the things promiſed are to be ſought of him, it becomes Prayers and Devotions; when they are delaied, Patience and Perſeverance; when they are beſtow'd and receiv'd, Thankfulneſs; when 'tis of his Providence, it turns Contentedneſs; when of the horrible nature and effects of ſin, Repentance; when of the ſpotleſs rewards of the other World, purification of our Hearts and Lives; when of the laſt Judgment, univerſal Innocence, that may ſtand the trial of it; when of God's Purity and Perfection, Imitation of him, or being Righteous as he is; when of *Chriſt* the Lord, and his Laws, keeping the Commandments; when

of the Holy Spirit, and his assistances, godly Care and good Endeavours; when of the Communion of Saints, keeping Unity in the Church, and attending Publick Ordinances. So that according to several objects, and occasions, this one Principle of Faith transforms it self into all shapes, and becomes all Duties, which are all therefore ascribed to it in the Holy Scriptures. As when it is said *to quench the fiery darts of the wicked*, Eph. 6. 16. *to overcome the world*, 1 Jo. 5. 4. *to purifie the heart*, Act. 15. 9. to be the Grand Parent of all Righteous doings, which are therefore called an *obedience*, or *righteousness of faith*, Rom. 4. 11, 13, & c. 16. 26. And when the good deeds of the best Men, such as *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Moses*, *Daniel*, &c. are attributed to it, *Heb.* 11.

Quest. And is it from this effecting all Virtues, that it stands adorn'd with all Privileges, and that such Promises are made to it when named alone, as are due only to it, and all others in conjunction?

Ans. Yes, such as that thereby we are *the children of God*, Gal. 3. 26. and *abide in the Son*, *and in the Father*, 1 Joh. 2. 24. and have *Christ dwelling in us*, Eph. 3. 17. That it *justifies us*, Rom. 5. 1. *makes us righteous*, Rom. 10. 10. gains *the remission of sins*, Rom. 3. 25. *saves* us, *Joh.* 5. 24. All which, though they manifestly require Repentance and Obedience, are yet in the places cited ascribed to Faith, because, as opportunity serves, and objects call for them, it is productive of them both.

Quest.

Queſt. You have fully ſhewed what are thoſe ſuitable affections, which Faith is to work in us. And thereby I perceive plainly, that Faith with its ſuitable effects, is the ſame in other words, with Faith and Repentance, which at firſt you ſaid was the way for Men to ſave their Souls. But will not Faith ſave us, and be imputed unto us for Righteouſneſs, till we are thus affected with it, and act according to our perſuaſions?

Anſ. No, without this it did not ſave good Men in old Times, nor will now ſave us.

Queſt. The *Old Teſtament* Worthies, both before the Flood and after, were accounted *Righteous*, and ſaved by their Faith, as the *Scripture* † teſtifies. But was not Faith accepted of them, unleſs it thus influenced and affected them? † Heb. 11.

Anſ. No, 'tis plain it was not, from the particular accounts of thoſe Worthies.

Queſt. Pray make that out in inſtances, which will be a clear proof in this caſe.

Anſ. Firſt, Noah became Heir of the Righteouſneſs by Faith, by believing, in a ſinful and ſecure Generation, that God would bring the general Flood upon the World. But that was, when he fear'd, and acted as one ſo perſuaded, or *being moved with fear, prepared an Ark at God's command, to the ſaving his* own *houſe* from it. *By which* Fear, and preparation of the Ark upon his Faith, as S. *Paul* notes, *he condemned the world, and became heir of the Righteouſneſs which is by faith*, Heb. 11. 7.

Again, Moſes was accepted, for believing the poor *Iſraelites*, who were then all oppreſſed ſlaves in *Egypt*, to be for all that the *People of God*. But that was, as in purſuance of that belief, *he refuſed to be called the Son of Pharaoh's Daughter*, the greateſt Honour and Worldly good he had in *Egypt*, and *choſe rather* to ſide, and *bear affliction with them*. Yea further, as at God's command, and in confidence of his Preſence with them, *he forſook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the King*, who, as he muſt needs think, would be moſt highly incenſed at his carrying away ſo great a Body of a Laborious, and Drudging People from him, *Heb.* 11.24,25,26,27. His Faith is alſo cried up, for believing God would *paſs over* all the Houſes of the *Iſraelites*, when he went to *ſlay all the firſt-born* among the *Egyptians*. But the acceptance of this, as S. *Paul* notes, was as through that Faith he obey'd God, *to keep the Paſsover, and the ſprinkling of blood upon the lintel, and the two ſide poſts* of their Doors, which God had made the condi-
*Exod. 12. 22, 23. tion, and * token of their being preſerv'd, *verſe* 28. 'Tis celebrated, laſtly, for believing God's † Promiſe to *divide the waters of*
† Exod. 14. 16. *the red ſea*, and make them ſtand as a Wall on either ſide, till he was paſſed over. But all the Praiſe of this belief, was as in virtue of it, he ventur'd himſelf and People, betwixt thoſe Mountains of Water, and *paſſed through as if it had been dry land*, as God directed, *verſe* 29.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, *The Harlot Rahab* was *preſerv'd* as S. *Paul*, and *juſtified* as S. *James* ſays, for believing that the * *God of Iſrael* was *ſtronger than all Gods*, and had *given Jericho to the Iſraelites*. But that, as we are expreſly told, was only as in purſuance of that belief, ſhe turn'd to that ſide, which ſhe ſaw God eſpouſed, and *concealed the ſpies, and ſent them away in peace*, James 2. 25. & Heb. 11. 31. * Joſh. 2. 9, 10, 11.

Laſtly, *Abraham*, whilſt *he* † *dwelt in Meſopotamia*, accepted for believing, that * *God would give him another land, wherein he ſhould grow to be a great nation*. But that was, when in vertue of that belief, *at God's command he left his own country*, and *obey'd* to *wander, not knowing whither he went*, in ſearch of that Seat and Inheritance, which God had choſen for him, *Heb.* 11. 8. He was eſpecially juſtified for believing God, when he promiſed * to *make his Son Iſaac a numerous, and bleſſed people*. But this was, as in Power of that Faith he ſtuck at nothing, but at God's command readily *offered him up when he was tried, accounting that God was able to raiſe him up, even from the dead*, to verifie that Promiſe to him, *Heb.* 11. 17, 18, 19. His *offering up Iſaac* in virtue of that Faith, *fulfilled that Scripture, which ſaith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for Righteouſneſs*, as S. *James* ſaith, *Jam.* 2. 21, 23. † Act. 7. 2. * Gen. 12. 1, 2. * Gen. 15. 5, 6. & c. 21. 12.

Queſt. I ſee plainly from theſe inſtances, that Faith when it had theſe ſuitable effects, was the thing God imputed for Righteouſneſs

Righteouſneſs to the *Old Teſtament* Worthies. They were all Righteous through Faith, not whilſt Faith was only an idle belief, and ſpeculative Notion, but when they feared, and acted, as any rational and conſiderate Man would do under ſuch perſuaſions. What have you to add more, to ſhew the ſame of us Chriſtians?

Anſ. The Faith that will avail and ſave us, we are plainly told, is a Faith that

1. Affects our Hearts, and renews all within us. It muſt beget *Hope* and *Truſt in God*, the *Devils faith* being rejected, becauſe they only *tremble* at God's Word, and dare not truſt it will do them any good, *Jam.* 2. 19. It muſt produce *Charity*, which, ſays S. *Paul*, * *fulfils the Law* of the Second Table, and leads into every other Duty. For *Charity is the end of the Law, out of faith unfeigned*, 1 Tim. 1. 5. and the Faith which *avails to the hope of righteouſneſs, is a Faith which worketh by love*, Gal. 5. 5, 6. In ſumm, laſtly, it muſt *cleanſe the Heart*, whence, as our Saviour obſerves, * *all evil doth procede*, purging out the *Old Man* of Pride, Anger, Envy, Luſt, *&c.* and planting therein the New Man of Humble, Pious, Pure, and Virtuous Tempers in its ſtead: *purifying the heart*, as S. *Peter* ſays, *Act.* 15. 9. and 1 *Pet.* 1. 21, 22.

* Rom. 13. 10.

* Matth. 15. 18, 19.

2. Reforms our Practice. The *Numbers* that *believed* acceptably, *turned unto the Lord*, ſaith S. *Luke*, Act. 11. 21. The *Faith which availeth, worketh by love*, ſays S. *Paul*, Gal 5. 6

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it *overcomes the world*, ſaith S. *John*, 1 Jo. 5. 4. it *makes us free from ſin*, ſays our *Saviour*, Jo. 8. 32. It muſt carry us on to good deeds, as it did *Abraham* to *leave his country*, Heb. 11. 8. and to *ſacrifice his ſon*, Jam. 2. 21, 22. and as it did *Rahab to receive the ſpies*, verſe 25. A working Faith is the only Faith that lives; for *faith without works is dead*, Jam. 2. 20. *as the body without the ſpirit is dead, ſo is faith without works dead*, verſe 26. It is the only Faith that profits; for *if a man ſay he hath faith, and have not works, what doth it profit?* verſe 14. It is the only Faith that ſaves, and juſtifies. *If a man ſhows faith without works, can faith ſave him? Abraham was juſtified by works*, verſe 21. and *Rahab was juſtified by works*, verſe 25. *ye ſee then, how that by works a man is juſtified* together with Faith; *and not by faith only*, verſe 24.

Queſt. If there is no Juſtification by any Faith, but what reforms the heart and practice, I perceive in the queſtion of *Juſtification*, we muſt no longer oppoſe Faith and Obedience, but take care to ſecure both, it being, as S. *Paul* ſaith, a *working faith*, or, as S. *James*, *faith and works* together, that juſtifies us.

Anſ. Very right.

Queſt. But doth not S *Paul*, when he ſpeaks of *our juſtification*, ſay it is *by faith without the deeds of the law?* Rom. 3. 28.

Anſ. Thoſe deeds, are the deeds of the *Jewiſh Law*, chiefly ſuch diſtinguiſhing ones, as *Circumciſion*, *Sacrifices*, *Jewiſh Holy-Days*, and

and observing the *Mosaick differences of clean and unclean Meats.* These, some *Zelots* for *Moses* pressed upon the *Gentile-Converts* in many Churches, saying, *Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved*, Act. 15. 1. And when some started up at *Rome*, to press the necessity of the same to Justification there, S. *Paul* opposes all such deeds, and tells them they must not seek to be justified as *Jews*, but as *Christians*. So what he rejects, are *Mosaick deeds*, or any others *under such qualifications, as the* Jews *obtruded, and cried up for Righteousness.*

Quest. Pray what are those?

Ans. First, They set up a *mere Humane Righteousness, in outward Acts.* This is Righteousness in *Civil Courts*, where the Judges are Men, that cannot see the Heart, but judge and pronounce according to *Overt-Actions.* And the Law of *Moses* being the Law of their *Common-Wealth*, whose Breaches were triable in their *own Courts*; they esteemed themselves Righteous in the eye of their Law, as the World doth in case of other *Political* and *State-Laws*, when they are not liable to be brought in Trouble, or Indicted upon them before any of their own Tribunals. This sense of their *Legal Righteousness*, was currant * among the *Doctors.* And *Josephus*, a learned *Jew*, who lived and flourished in the *Apostles* own Days, asserts it in no less an instance, than that of *Sacriledge*; * wondering at *Polybius*, an other-

* *Vid. Grot.* on Matth. 5. 20.

* *Antiq.* l. 12. c. 13.

otherwiſe Praiſe-worthy Writer, as he ſays, for aſcribing *God's exemplary Vengeance* on *Antiochus Epiphanes*, to *his Sacrileage only deſign'd upon the Temple at* Elymaïs. Whereas, ſays he, *If he only intended, but did not execute and effect it, he did not deſerve to be puniſhed for it.* And accordingly, in S. *Paul's* accounts of the *Jewiſh Righteouſneſs*, he is careful ſtill to call it a * *Juſtification*, or *Righteouſneſs of works*, as conſiſting only in things brought on to act and practice. And meaſuring themſelves thus only by External acts, as cognizable before Humane Courts; the orderly Livers among them, made no more ſcruple of aſſerting their Righteouſneſs in the Eye of their Law, than any good Subjects do in pleading their innocence as to the Laws of their ſeveral Countries. As we find *the young man* did to our *Saviour*, when he poſed him upon *the Ten Commandments*, ſaying, *all theſe things have I kept from my youth up*, Matth. 19. 18, 19, 20. And as S. *Paul* did, in ſetting off his *Jewiſh Confidences*, ſaying, That *touching the Righteouſneſs, which is in the Law*, he was *blameleſs*, i. e. not to be blamed before any of their Tribunals, *Phil.* 3. 6.

* Rom. 4. 2, 6. & c. 9, 31, 32. Gal. 2. 16.

Queſt. But did not ſome things in the *Jewiſh* Law, extend to Mens *Hearts* and *Spirits*. Particularly among the *Ten Commandments*, is there not *One*, viz. the *Tenth*, which forbids all inward *coveting* of what is our Neighbours?

Anſ.

Anſ. Yes, but there being no notice taken of theſe, nor puniſhments inflicted for them in their Courts, the *Doctors*, as may appear from what I have ſaid, looked on them rather as Counſels of Perfection, than ſtrict Laws of Righteouſneſs. Or if as Laws, yet ſuch, the Breaches whereof were ſufficiently atoned by their Daily, or Annual Sacrifices: which *ſanctified*, as S. *Paul* ſaith, *to the purging of the fleſh*; i. e. to indemnifie them before Men as to their Carnal, Secular Intereſts; though not to clear them before God, or *make them perfect as pertaining to the conſcience*, Heb. 9. 9, 13.

Queſt. What other Qualifications did the *Jews* cry up in thoſe Works, which they depended on to make them Righteous?

Anſ. Secondly, Their *merits*. For they ſet up a proud, boaſtful Righteouſneſs, which ſhould challenge the reward by way of merit and equivalence: not being content to reap all the Benefit, unleſs they could alſo arrogate all the Glory and Honour of it to themſelves.

Queſt. Whereon could they pretend to erect this?

Anſ. On *two* Foundations. *Firſt*, The *Power of natural free-will*, affirming their good deeds to be wrought in virtue of their own ſtrength, without which, whatever Glory there might be in them, it could be none of theirs. They thought they had Ability enough, for all the Righteous works they

they were to do, upon the *ſtock of Nature:* and needed no inward and enlivening Grace, but a meer *external Revelation*, or *dead Letter*, as their *Law* is ſtiled in * *Scripture*. And all this Power, they aſcribe to *Natural free-will* ſince the *fall*. For *the good, which* Adam *did before it*, † ſay they, *was as a pure intelligence, out of neceſſity of Nature. But his eating of the forbidden tree, of the Knowledge of good and ill, brought him, and his Poſterity, down to free will*, or an indifferency to either. Which liberty, they make moſt abſolute ever ſince: and accordingly interpret that common ſaying among them, *All things are in the Hand of God, but the fear of God*, to note ſuch abſoluteneſs of our free-will to good, as has nothing to controul it.

* 2 Cor. 3. 6.

† See Mr. *Smith's* Diſcourſe on Legal Righteouſneſs, *c.* 2.

Secondly, On the *intrinſick worth* and *value of their own deeds*, making them to deſerve Heaven by way of equivalence. They were the great affecters, and aſpirers after merits, * ſaying, That *happineſs by way of reward, is far greater, and more magnificent, than by way of mercy*. And they were the great aſſerters of them, claiming the reward on ſuch deeds, as † *excluded grace*, and were aimed all for * *boaſting*, as S. *Paul* ſays of them. And ſeveral Rules of eſtimate and valuation they had, to ſecure this to themſelves: † *one* was, from *the number and tale of their good deeds, if they had but done one more good, than bad actions, to make their merits preponderate their demerits. Another* was, from *their weight and importance*, if they had

* See Mr. *Smith*, *ibid.*

† Ro. 11. 6.

* Eph. 2. 8, 9.

† Mr. *Smith*, *ib. c.* 3.

had either the Skill, or good Fortune, *to make choice of ſuch, as God ſet moſt by, which might be put in the Scale againſt ſeveral others.* Nay, *ſuch in their account was the deſert of every good work, if they continued to keep any one of their Sixteen hundred and thirteen Precepts,* out of *Love to it,* and not from any *worldly reſpect, though at the ſame time the reſt were neglected.* Or if, when they had nothing elſe to produce, they could but ſay *they were the natural Seed of Abraham,* (a ground of *Jewiſh* confidence tax'd by * S. *John* the *Baptiſt*) and *were literally circumciſed,* they thought there was enough in them to merit the future reward. And being thus liberal in undervaluing what came from God; and over-valuing what they did for him: whilſt they thus ſet their own rates, they were ſure not to want deſert enough for the greateſt recompences. Yea, ſo far, as to make out their common ſaying, that *all Iſraelites ſhall have a portion in the world to come.* And for all theſe things, ſufficient teſtimonies are produced by learned Men out of their own Writings.

* Mat. 3. 7, 8, 9.

Queſt. So that I perceive the *Jewiſh* deeds, ſet up for Righteouſneſs by their *Doctors,* were the deeds of their own Law, eſpecially thoſe diſtinguiſhing Laws, which were peculiar to themſelves. And thoſe not any ſecret and ſpiritual, but only external acts, ſuch as fell under the cognizance of their own Courts of Juſtice. Which were cried up for Righteouſneſs, as performed in virtue

tue of their own ſtrength, and meriting the reward by their own worth and excellence.

Anſ. Very right. And the aſſerters of ſuch works, muſt needs be under a great ſurpriſe, to hear of Juſtification by Goſpel-duties. Extending not only to Overt-Acts, but their Hearts, and Spirits; which were to be performed by the help of God's inward Grace; and rewarded through *Chriſt*'s merits, and God's merciful acceptance. And their way of meriting acceptance, by meer external *Moſaick* works, performed in vertue of their own free-will and Humane ſtrength, being in all its points a way of their own ſetting up, but diſowned and rejected by God, S. *Paul* calls *their own Righteouſneſs:* and oppoſes to the other, of being eſteemed Righteous through *Chriſt*'s merits, and God's merciful acceptance, on Faith and Obedience to the Goſpel, wrought by the help of God's Grace; which he calls *God's Righteouſneſs*, and the *Righteouſneſs of faith*, Phil. 3. 9. & Rom. 10. 3, 5, 6.

Queſt. Do the *Apoſtles*, in their diſputes of Juſtification with the *Jews*, ſet themſelves to beat down theſe points?

Anſ. Yes, and more eſpecially S. *Paul*, both at *Rome*, and *Galatia*, and other places. For in this matter they declare, how * *by the works of the Law, ſhall no fleſh be juſtified*, ſo that *the Gentiles muſt not live like Jews:* but only by *faith and obedience of Chriſt*, or † *faith working by love*, ſo that *the natural Jews* muſt

* Rom. 3. 20. Gal. 2. 14, 15, 16.
† Gal. 5. 6.

live as *Christians.* That this Obedience *avails,* when it is not only with the *outward,* but also with the *inward* Man, containing together with the external Practice, a * *renewal of the mind,* a † *circumcision of the heart and spirit,* and a * *new creature.* That 'tis wrought in us, not through meer *humane strength,* but the *internal grace of God,* so as to be truly the † *fruit of the Spirit,* and the * *renewal of the Holy Ghost.* And that the Gospel offering such inward Grace, is thereupon a † *ministry of the Spirit,* and a *ministration of Righteousness:* but that the Law wanting it, is therefore only an external Revelation, a *ministration of the letter, of death, and condemnation,* which seeing it * *could not give* the *life* it required, but only an outward direction how to lead it, therefore *Righteousness could not come by it.* That this is counted Righteousness, only in virtue of *Redemption by Christ,* and of the *merit of his Sacrifice,* first purchasing the † *pardon of our sins,* and then the *acceptance of our services:* * *Christ being the end of the law for Righteousness,* and we † *being justified through the redemption that is in Jesus, whose blood is a propitiation for our sins,* and * *who is made to us of God redemption, and righteousness.* That in him, God accepts and rewards it, not for its *own merits,* but out of his *meer bounty* and *free grace,* without, and infinitely beyond its deserts. We † *being justified freely, by his grace.* And that this way, as God's free Grace is exalted, so all *Jewish* * *boasts*

* Rom. 12. 1, 2.
† Rom. 2. 28, 29.
* Gal. 6. 15.
† Gal. 5. 22.
* Tit. 3. 5.
† 2 Cor. 3. 6, 7, 8, 9.
* Gal. 3. 21, 22. & 6. 5. 5.
† Rom. 4. 6, 7, 8. & 3. 25.
* Rom. 10. 4.
† Rom. 3. 24, 25.
* 1 Cor. 1. 30.
† Ro. 3. 24.
* Ro. 3. 27. Eph. 2. 8, 9.

are

are excluded. Lastly, instead of the *Jewish* barter and exchange, in weighing out good against bad actions, or merits against demerits; they tell us, that he who continues to * *offend in one point*, is as liable to be condemned, though not to so sore a punishment, as *he* that *is guilty of all.* And that he, who sincerely endeavours to keep all, after * *he has done the most*, must *say he has done no more than his duty*, and *is* still *an unprofitable servant.* All which, with sundry others, every where observable by any careful peruser of the *Apostolical Writings*, are directly levelled against the foresaid *Jewish* Tenets.

* Jam. 2. 10.

* Luke 17. 10.

Quest. And such *Jewish Deeds*, you say, are *the deeds of the law*, which S. *Paul* opposes, *Rom.* 3. 28.

Ans. Yes.

Quest. Indeed the *Apostles* Disputation there of *Justification*, is evidently against the *Jews.*

Ans. Yes, and the way whereby they sought to be justified, was by *the Law of Moses.* That they cried up, as the great Rule, and Dispensation of Righteousness, and Perfection: *they stumbled*, as he declares, *at that stumbling stone*, Rom. 9. 31, 32. And they looked to be justified by it, in *virtue* and *merit of their own works*, as I have shew'd, not through the *merit of Christ's Sacrifice*, and the *Grace of God pardoning their offences:* which made S. *Paul* declare to *all, who would be justified by the Law, that Christ was become*

of none effect to them, and *that they were fallen from grace,* Gal. 5. 2, 4.

Quest. But is it clear he speaks of such *Jewish deeds?*

Ans. Yes, because, as I say, such were set up by the *Jews,* against whom he argues. Nay, as he adds, they were such, as would make it necessary for all Men to turn *Jews.* For that way, says he, *God would be the God of the Jews only, and not of the Gentiles,* verse 29. Besides, they are such works, as are a ground of * *boasting,* verse 27. and make *the reward reckoned out of debt* or desert, *without grace,* or being beholden for it, *Rom.* 4. 4. *excluding grace,* as being inconsistent with it, *Rom.* 11. 6. And so the *Jews* believed, and taught of theirs, accounting Heaven a just and deserved Wages for their works, without any need of Redemption by *Christ*'s Sacrifice, as I have already shewed.

* Eph. 2. 8, 9.

Quest. And S. *Paul*, though he denies such *Jewish* works, asserts works after the *Christian* Faith, wrought in us by God's Grace, and accepted through *Christ*'s Sacrifice, to justifie and make us Righteous?

Ans. Yes, in the very same Verse, wherein he rejects *the Law of works*; that is, *Jewish* works, he declares we are justified by *another Law,* viz. *the Law of Faith,* in performing what it imposes, *Rom.* 3. 27. And the Faith, which *avails to Righteousness in Christ Jesus,* he says, is a *working Faith,* Gal. 5. 6. And the same S. *Paul* speaking of the Faith, which justified the Ancient Worthies,

Worthies, particularly notes thoſe correſpondent Affections and Practices, which it produced in them to make them Righteous. As *Noah's holy fear*, and *obedience* in *building of the Ark*, though all the while he was laughed at for his pains, by a merry and ſecure World; and *Moſes's quitting the higheſt hopes and honours of Egypt*, to aſſociate with the perſecuted People of God; and *Abraham's leaving his Country*, and *ſacrificing his Son* at God's command; and all the other inſtances above-mentioned.

Queſt. By what you have ſaid, I plainly perceive, that a working Faith, or a Faith that ſuitably influences and affects us, is the Faith that always did, and always muſt recommend Men to Almighty God. Which, when the *Scripture* contents it ſelf barely to imply the effects, it ſimply calls Faith; when it would ſpeak out, and expreſs both, it calls Faith and Repentance.

Anſ. Very right.

Queſt. But ſince all Faith doth not atchieve theſe noble feats, and all Graces do not grow upon this ſingle ſtock in all Believers; Pray what are the great properties, that fit Faith for theſe effects, and diſtinguiſh the Faith of thoſe that ſhow theſe Fruits, from the Faith of thoſe that want them?

Anſ. They are reducible, I think, to theſe *Two*, the *ſincerity*, and the *ſtrength* of it.

Quest. What mean you by the *sincerity* of this Faith?

Ans. First, That it be *real and unfeigned.* Not a meer pretence of Faith, under which *Infidels* may disguise themselves among Christians, to be trusted or employed. Nor a meer outside profession, which unthinking Men may chuse and put on, as they do their Cloathes, without looking for any further reason, than to be in the fashion, and which they can as easily and readily alter again, as they do their Habit, when the Mode shall turn. But a real, inward belief and persuasion. It is an *unfeigned Faith*, that S. *Paul* commends in *Timothy*, 2 *Tim.* 1. 5. and an *unfeigned Faith*, out of which flows *charity*, 1 *Tim.* 1. 5. and the Faith or *Wisdom*, which makes Men *pure and peaceable*, &c. says S. *James*, is *without Hypocrisie*, Jam. 3. 17. So that they are never like to be fruitful Believers, who follow *Jesus*, as some *Jews* did, only to run in with the Crowd, or for the sake *of the Loaves*, more than out of inward Convictions.

Secondly, That it be *Hearty* and *Affectionate.* Not a meer speculative Opinion, and careless Notion, as of things wherein we are not much interested: but a moving and influencing perswasion, wherewith all the powers of the Soul are affected. Our Opinions must form our Passions, and advance into *Love*, *Desire*, *Hope*, *Fear*, *Care*, *Endeavour*, and the like, according to the different nature and power of the things believed.

lieved. The Belief that *ſaves*, ſays S. *Paul*, is a Belief *with the heart*, as well as with the head, *Rom.* 10. 9. And the Faith, which *avails to Righteouſneſs*, *works by love*, Gal. 5. 5, 6. And therefore they are never like to prove fruitful Believers, who read and credit the Story of *Jeſus*, and the things of Chriſtianity, as they would the Story of *Caſar* or *Alexander*, of the *Aſſyrian* or *Perſian Empire*, as things, that are very remote in *Place*, or *Time*, and, being of little concern to them, do not much either delight, or afflict them. Such indifferent and unconcern'd Believers, are like to make no better than Chriſtian *News-mongers*, whoſe Chriſtian Faith furniſhes them only to talk and tell ſtories.

Queſt. Beſides this ſincerity, is it neceſſary to a *ſaving* and *effective Faith*, that there be moreover a good degree of *ſtrength* and *firmneſs* in it?

Anſ. Yes, for ſuch a ſtrong Faith it was, that made *Abraham*, and other *Holy Men*, obey God, whereupon they were accepted. *Abraham*, ſays the Scripture, *was not weak* or ſickly, *but ſtrong in Faith*, *whereby he gave glory unto God*, Rom. 4. 19, 20. the Faith that fits us for Chriſtian Privileges, and the Bleſſings of *Baptiſm*, as *Philip told the Eunuch*, is *a belief with all the heart*, Act. 8. 37. If good Fruits do not ſpring from Faith, it is becauſe there is but little of it; why *take ye thought*, *O ye of little faith?* Matth. 6. 30. & 8. 26. or becauſe there is very ſmall,

or no life in it, *Faith* being as *dead, as the body is without the ſpirit, when it* ſtands *alone*, and no vital motions or effects ſtream from it, *Jam.* 2. 17, 20, 26.

Queſt. I perceive this ſtrength of Faith, is neceſſary to enable it to do its work and conquer all that doth oppoſe it. But in what doth this ſtrength conſiſt?

Anſ. In *three* things eſpecially. 1. That it be *aſſured and confident.* 2. That it be *honeſt*, or ſeated in one that makes conſcience of being juſt to his word. 3. That it be *reſolute.*

Queſt. Muſt the Faith, that produces theſe ſuitable effects, be *aſſured* and *confident?*

Anſ. Yes, for a wavering Opinion will not accompliſh its work. It muſt make us forego many grateful things, and undergo many ungrateful ones, and attempt many that are very difficult and laborious. And Men will not run theſe ventures, and bear theſe loſſes, on uncertain hopes, but only on firm and certain expectations. And therefore right and acceptable Believers are exhorted to *draw near to God with full aſſurance of faith*, and *to hold faſt their profeſſion without wavering*, Heb. 10. 22, 23. and to *ſhew diligence, to the full aſſurance of hope t the end*, Heb. 6. 11. And half Faith, makes ſuch Believers to be like *King Agrippa*, only half and *almoſt Chriſtians*, Act. 26. 28.

Queſt. Muſt it alſo be *honeſt*, that is, ha[illegible] d Conſcience accompanying it, and

and be ſeated in one, who is careful to be juſt to his word?

Anſ. Yes, as it implies the owning of Doctrines and Propoſitions, ſo it leads to ingage in Promiſes and Undertakings, the good performance whereof includes not only Underſtanding and Knowledge, but alſo Honeſty and good Conſcience. So that a fruitful Faith muſt not be a bare skilfulneſs in Opinion, but alſo a truſtineſs and integrity in diſcharging a Profeſſion. It effects Obedience only in juſt and upright tempers, that make Conſcience to perform their promiſes, to fulfil their pretences, and anſwer all juſt expectations. Among all thoſe ſeveral ſorts of *hearers*, by whom it was *received*, the *word* believed *brought forth fruit* only *in an honeſt and good heart*, as our *Lord* himſelf notes, *Luke* 8. 15. And *to draw* us *near to God, with a full aſſurance of faith*, we muſt joyn *a true heart, and a clean conſcience*, Heb. 10. 22. and the *charity*, which the Law requires, flows then only from an *unfeigned faith*, when 'tis accompanied with *a pure heart, and a good conſcience*, 1 Tim. 1. 5. And therefore in *Simon Magus* it bore no Fruit, becauſe *his heart was not right in the ſight of God*, Act. 8. 13, 21. So that we muſt not wonder, if we ſee a true Faith prove barren, and producing no obedience, in a diſhoneſt, and falſe Man. Since it is not Faith alone, but Honeſty that muſt make a Man careful to remember, and perform his undertaking, and

falſe

falſe unjuſt Perſons, how right ſoever they may be in their belief and apprehenſions, will be as like to break their word with God, as they are with their Neighbours.

Queſt. Muſt it alſo, *laſtly*, be *reſolute*, and fully fixed after all things are well conſidered: That ſo, when any hardſhips ariſe in the way of Faith, we may not be ſoon ſtaggered in mind, and put to deliberate anew, whether or no to go on in it?

Anſ. Yes, when they want this reſolvedneſs, Men are not like to hold on in a way of difficulties, and ſuch as do every where occur in Faiths race. Every true Believer muſt have caſt up all the coſt, and pains of his way beforehand, as our Saviour tells us in the Parables of the *wiſe builder*, and of the *king going to war*, Luke 14.28,31. They muſt ſtand prepared to run all hazards, and ſuſtain all loſſes, ſetting Faith above all things elſe, and reſolving to ſtick to it, whatever prove its trials and diſcouragements. And ſuch *Believers* as theſe, the Scripture calls *grounded, and ſettled in the faith*, Col. 1. 23. and *rooted, built up, and eſtabliſhed in it*, Col. 2.7. And the *believers*, or *receivers of the word*, who *fell off in tribulation*, are ſaid to *have had no root in themſelves*, Matth. 13.21. A deliberate reſolution is a ſure Ground-work, and what is built on that may be like to ſtand a Storm, and after all the Aſſaults that are made upon it, remain unſhaken.

Queſt.

Queſt. So that the Faith, whereon all the fore-mentioned Fruits are like to grow, muſt not be a meer pretence of Faith, but ſincere and undiſſembled; it muſt not be an empty profeſſion, and formal out-ſide, but inward in the apprehenſion of the mind; it muſt not be a wavering Opinion, but confident, and well aſſured; it muſt not be a ſpeculative, cool, and unmoving Notion, but hearty, concerning, and affectionate; it muſt not be in a careleſs, forgetful, and failing, but in a conſcientiouſly careful, juſt, and performing Man; it muſt not act on an irreſolute heart, which will be eaſily daunted, or ſoon ſtaggered, but one, that upon good reaſon, and after due deliberation, is fully fixt, and reſolved to follow it.

Anſ. Yes, the Faith that influences the Heart and Life, and ſtands in all times and trials, muſt be thus qualified. And the Faith, which is either diſſembled, formal, wavering, unaffecting, careleſs, or irreſolute, ſome one or other of which the Faith of all Sinners is, is like to have no ſuch Bleſſed Fruits proceding from it: As *Simon Magus*'s had not, whoſe *heart was not right*; nor *Agrippa*'s, whoſe Faith was but *almoſt*; nor the Temporary Believers, whoſe *faith fell away becauſe it wanted root.* So that theſe different attendants, and various qualifications of Faith, make the difference in its Fruits and Effects, and diſtinguiſh the Faith of Saints from the Faith of Sinners.

Queſt.

Queſt. It has been often ſaid of Faith by ſome, that it is an act of *Recumbency*, or *leaning* and *rolling our ſelves on Chriſt for Salvation.* Are ſuch Phraſes applicable to Faith in a *literal*, and *common* underſtanding of them?

Anſ. No, for Faith is an act of our Spirits, and though Bodies lean and reſt on Bodies, yet Spirits have none of theſe Bodily Geſtures, and Affections. When ſuch words are uſed in expreſſing *mental* acts, they are *Metaphors*, which are applied to them on account of ſome *Similitude* and *Reſemblance?*

Queſt. What acts can the Faith of a Man's mind exert about a Perſon, which may anſwer theſe forms of *recumbing*, or *leaning* upon him?

Anſ. Either Believing ſome Doctrine which he teaches, or relying on ſome Promiſe which he makes. Theſe may be ſet off by the acts of recumbing, leaning, and rolling. For as theſe are ways of Bodies reſting, and depending; ſo are thoſe of a Man's mind's doing the ſame upon any Perſon. They acquieſce and reſt on his Judgment, in what he ſays; and on his Fidelity, in what he promiſes: which gives them the ſame eaſe and ſettlement, as the acts of rolling, leaning, and recumbing do to Bodies.

Queſt. Faith is alſo called by ſome, the *hand of the Soul*, that *reaches at*, and *apprehends* and *applies Chriſt's Merits.* What is there

in

in this Spiritual Grace, that can answer these expressions?

Ans. Reaching at them, is *assenting* to some Propositions about them. And *laying hold of* and *applying* them, is *consenting* and *complying* with some Overtures, or *fulfilling* some terms and conditions, whereby they become our own. Putting out these mental acts has the same effect and use to our Souls, as stretching out the hand to apprehend and apply things has to our Bodies, that is, *to bring the thing desired down to our selves.*

Quest. So that to roll and lean upon *Jesus Christ*, is in plain *English* only to believe what he says, and to rely upon what he promises. And to apprehend, or lay hold on *Christ*, and apply his Merits, in clearer and more intelligible Language, is only to fulfil the Gospel-terms, or to have Faith with its fore-cited effects, that is, to believe and repent, whereby his benefits become ours.

Quest. Yes, that I take to be the true meaning and explication of these obscure Phrases. I confess I am a great lover of plain, and intelligible Speech. And above all things else, I love to hear Men speak plain in the great Truths of Religion, and Points of Salvation, wherein there is the most need of all to inform, and edifie Men's understandings. And therefore I heartily wish these dark, and intricate words were less used, or wholly laid aside in these important

portant matters, they being words of Mens invention, which the Holy *Scripture* no where uſes about them, and ſuch words too, as I am ſure do more amuſe, than inſtruct thoſe that hear them. But if any think fit ſtill to uſe them, or meet with Faith ſet off by them in Books or Diſcourſes, this, and no more, in a true ſenſe, and in plain intelligible *Engliſh*, I think is the meaning of them.

Queſt. If Faith in *Chriſt* be a Faith in his Word, then is it no part of *Faith* for any Man to *believe his ſins are pardoned*, nor of *Infidelity* to doubt of it, becauſe particular Men have no word of his for that?

Anſ. Very right. He tells us in the *general* he will pardon Penitents, but in his Word he has not deſcended to tell *particular* Men they are truly Penitent, having reſerved that to be declared at the *laſt judgment*. Beſides, every Man muſt have true *Faith* before he can be pardoned, *Faith* and *Repentance* being the conditions of Pardon, But no Man muſt believe his ſins are pardoned before they are pardoned, ſince that were plainly to believe a falſhood.

Queſt. But ſince all doubting of the Pardon of our Sins, and the Favour of God, implies *diſtruſt*, how will it ſtand with *Faith in God*?

Anſ. The belief that our Sins are pardoned, implies our truſt and confidence of *two* things. *One* is, of God's Power and Fidelity, in fulfilling his Promiſes. The

other

other is, of ſufficiency of our own care, in performing his Terms. Now Faith implies truſt, and confidence, only in the *former* of theſe.

Queſt. Is Faith only a confidence, and truſt in God, not in our ſelves, and implies a good opinion only of his Power and Faithfulneſs, but not of our own fitneſs?

Anſ. Yes, and ſo of *Abraham* it is ſaid, when *he believed*, That *he gave glory to God*, Rom. 4. 20. His Faith conſiſted, as the *Apoſtle* notes, in what regarded him: he *being counted righteous for believing*, that *what God had promiſed, he was fully able to perform*, verſe 21. When once Men have the greateſt aſſurance of thoſe Divine Properties, they are ſaid to have the greateſt Faith, though at the ſame time they think meanly, and are moſt diſtruſtful of themſelves. So the good *Centurion* was, having ſuch confidence in Chriſt's Power, that he thought a *word of his mouth* would recover his Son, without giving him the trouble to *come in perſon:* and at the ſame time thinking ſo meanly of himſelf, that he judged *his houſe unworthy to receive him.* And of this *Chriſt* declares, *I have not found ſo great faith, no not in Iſrael*, Matth. 8. 8, 10.

Queſt. I perceive 'tis no part of any Man's Faith, to believe his ſins are pardoned, nor of Infidelity to doubt of it. But though ſuch doubts are not the ſin of *Infidelity* againſt God, yet are they not always *ſinful*, and *blame-worthy* upon ſome other account?

Anſ.

Anſ. No, but oft-times expreſſions of virtue, and ſerve to recommend us the more to God; as being acts of humility and ſelf-abaſement, of modeſty and poverty of Spirit, which ſet no Man further off, but bring him nearer, and intereſt him the more in his favour. The fearful *humble Publican*, who durſt not preſume on any favour, but *with dejected eyes ſtood afar off, went home juſtified of God, rather than the proud Phariſee*, who *juſtified himſelf*. Upon which our Saviour adds, that *every one, who exalts himſelf, ſhall be abaſed; and every one, that humbleth himſelf, ſhall be exalted*, Luke 18. 10. to 15. *God is nigh*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, *to the broken of heart, and contrite of ſpirit*, Pſal. 34. 18. *He dwells with the contrite, and humble ſpirit, to revive the ſpirit of the humble, and revive the heart of the contrite ones*, Iſaiah 57. 15. *He looks to him that is poor, and of a contrite ſpirit, and trembles at his word*, Iſaiah 66. 2. to *lift up thoſe, that humble themſelves in his ſight*, James 4. 10. and to *bleſs the poor in ſpirit*, Matth. 5. 3. Indeed, dejection, ſadneſs, and tormenting fears, are a backner of good endeavours; and accuſe God, as if he were an hard, uncomfortable Maſter, very difficult to pleaſe; and Religion, as if it were a ſowre, melancholy ſervice: ſo that faithful hearts muſt not affect, or harbour fear to theſe degrees. But when they maintain a comfortable hope, 'tis generally more commendable to lean to the ſide of humble fear, than of arrogant ſelf-flattery, to be

be too lowly and modeſt, rather than too preſumptuous and boaſting.

Queſt. And is it not more ſafe too?

Anſ. Yes, fear begets care, whereas ſecurity ſlackens watchfulneſs, and abates endeavour. And therefore the *Apoſtle* adviſes thoſe, who would expect *to ſtand, not to think highly, but fear*, Rom. 11. 20. and to *work out their ſalvation with fear*, Phil. 2. 12, 13. And he was a wiſe Man that ſaid, *Happy is he that feareth always, but he that hardneth his heart* againſt fear, *ſhall fall into miſchief*, Prov. 28. 14. The wiſeſt, and the beſt way generally is, to be *fully aſſured of what concerns God*, but *fearful and jealous of what depends upon our ſelves.*

Queſt. But have not ſome good Men great confidence of God's favour? And ſince that is the priviledge of the moſt conſummate Saints, and gives the greateſt * *peace* and † *joy in God*, and *comfort in believing*, which the Scripture ſpeaks of: muſt it not be a moſt juſtifiable, as it is really a moſt bleſſed and deſirable thing?

* Gal. 5. 22. Pſal. 37. 37. † Rom. 15. 13.

Anſ. Yes, if their confidence is not beyond their grounds, and under this comfortable aſſurance of their preſent claim to Happineſs, they preſerve an humble ſenſe of their own defects and unworthineſs, and a fear of their falling from it by after-failures. And this comfortable aſſurance is vouchſafed to ſome extraordinary good Souls, as their ſpecial priviledge; as fears and doubts are continued to others, for their

exercise. And different Persons are either indulged more happy injoyment from God, or so exercised as to make them more acceptable and dear to him, both these ways.

Quest. You have said enough to explain the *nature*, and to set off the *excellency* and *usefulness* of *Faith*. But lest after we have taken the pains to walk by it, it should fail all our expectations in the end; pray show me something of the *certainty* of it.

Ans. That depends on the *Authority of Jesus Christ*, who is the *Author* of our Faith. And all must needs be true that he Says, and sure that he Promises; because he is the *true Messiah*, or the *Christ of God*, who was to come as his Great *Prophet*, to make known his mind unto the World.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

That Jeſus is the Chriſt, from Ancient Prophecies.

The Contents.

Among thoſe Prophecies, which prove Jeſus to be the Chriſt, First, *Some preſcribe the time of his coming. This they mark out by the nearneſs of ſuch notable Occurrences, and Revolutions, as would fall under all Mens obſervation. And by fixing the very Year he ſhould appear in. Accordingly there was a general expectation of him at that time. His coming not put off beyond the time appointed, for the ſins of the People. An account, why the* Jews, *who read theſe clear Notes of the time in their own Prophets, are not convinced by them.* Secondly, *Others aſſign mean, peculiar, and viſible Notes, whereby he may be demonſtratively pointed out from all other Men. As,* 1. *His being born of a Virgin. This in ſome ſenſe ſpoken of a Virgin of that time, but principally of Meſſiah, and then only fully accompliſhed, when Jeſus came. This cleared from exceptions.* 2. *His having the Spirit of Miracles, reſting on him.* 3. *His Death, with the particular manner, and circumſtances of*

it. And his returning to Life again. 4. His putting an end to the Jewish *Sacrifices and* Mosaick *Covenant, and bringing in a New one, and a better, to supply its defects. 5. His erecting an Universal Empire, and appearing as a mighty King. This not a Secular, but Spiritual Kingdom. 6. His converting the Heathen World, from their Idol-worship. Jesus silenced the Oracles, and cast the impure Spirits out of their Temples. This an Argument for him, not only as accomplishing a Prediction, but also as 'tis plainly a Divine thing. The Prophecies of an Universal Probity, and Peace under Messiah, cleared up, by an account both of their meaning, and accomplishment. The fore-cited Prophecies understood of Messiah by the Ancient* Jews, *though denied by some later in hatred to our Jesus.*

Question. HOW doth it appear, that *Jesus*, who was born of *Mary*, and suffered under *Pontius Pilate*, is the *Christ?*

Ans. First, From *ancient Prophecies. Secondly*, From undoubted *Divine Testimonies* other ways.

Quest. Doth this appear from *ancient Prophecies?*

Ans. Yes, and by these S. *Paul* endeavour'd to convince the *Jews* at *Rome*, *persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the Law of Moses, and out of the Prophets*, Act. 28. 23.

Quest.

Quest. How do these *Prophecies* demonstrate him?

Ans. *Two* ways. 1. By *prescribing the exact time of his coming.* 2. By *assigning many peculiar, and most visible Notes, whereby he may be demonstratively pointed out from all other Men.*

Quest. How do they *prefix the exact time for Messiah's coming?*

Ans. By sundry notable, and publick turns and occurrences, which would be remarked by all, and in judging whereof they could not be mistaken.

Quest. I pray you name them.

Ans. 1. They say he shall come before the People of the *Jews* cease to be a *Nation*, and a *Body Politick*: which now they are ceased to be, having no Country, or Common-wealth, which they can call their own, but for above 1600 years, ever since the destruction of *Jerusalem*, living scatter'd, and dispersed in every Country and Kingdom. And this notable alteration, which all the World must observe, because thereby it lost a Nation that bore a great name, and, by using most appropriate and separate rites, made a peculiar Figure among them, is expressly set out by the *Patriarch Jacob*, as a sign to follow the coming of *Messiah*. *The Scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a Law-giver from between his feet,* that is, the Nation of the *Jews* denominated from *Judah*, shall not cease to have Government among them as a Civil State,

and the Benefit of their own Laws, *till Shilo come*, Gen. 49. 10.

Quest. What other notable sign do they give of this time?

Ans. Secondly, They say his coming shall be, whilst the *second Temple* is yet standing; which has been ruinated and demolished, ever since the City was destroyed by *Titus Vespasian*. *The Lord whom you seek, the messenger of the covenant, shall suddenly come to his temple*, saith God by *Malachi*, Mal. 3. 1. And of the *second Temple*, says he again by *Haggai*, *I will shake all nations, and the desire of all Nations shall come, and fill this house with glory*, that is, with the Glory of his Presence, *Hag.* 2. 7. This presence of *Messiah* in resorting to it, was that, which was to make *the glory of this later house, greater than the glory of the former house*, verse 9. It was much inferiour to it, in respect of the Magnificence of Building: *Is it not in your eyes, who have seen the glory of the former house*, says God, *in comparison of it, as nothing?* verse 3. *And when the Priests, and Levites, and Fathers, that were ancient Men, and had seen the first house*, saw the *Foundation of it laid*, whilst others, who had not seen the former, *shouted for joy, they wept*, remembring the disproportion, *Ezra* 3. 12. And under it *Five* noble priviledges, *viz.* the *Ark of the Covenant*, whence God gave * Responses by audible Voices; the † *Urim and Thummim*, that Oracle for the miraculous Instruction of the *High-Priest*, when he consulted God on any

* Exod. 25. 21, 22.
† Num. 27. 21.

any State-concern; the * *fire from heaven* upon the *altar*, to consume the Sacrifice; the † *Schechinah*, or Divine Presence in the *Holy of Holies*, by a *visible Glory* and appearance upon the * *mercy-seat*; and the *Holy Ghost* in the *Spirit of Prophecy*, which, though it did many under the former, inspired none under this House; as the *Jewish* Writers observe, were all withdrawn. But notwithstanding it had the disadvantage in all these eminent respects, yet the presence of *Messiah* in it, was to give such a lustre to it, as in the Judgment of God himself would make it more Glorious.

* Lev. 9. 23, 24.
† 1 King. 8. 11.
& Ps. 80. 1.
* Lev. 16. 2.

Quest. Do they mention any other Sign, that visibly marks out this time?

Ans. Yes, *Thirdly*, That it shall be shortly before the *destruction of the Temple*, and of the *City Jerusalem*, and the *utter desolation of the Jewish Nation*. For so the Prophet *Daniel* declares, that at the end of a set number *of weeks*, *Messiah shall be cut off*, *and* then *the people of the prince that shall come*, that is, the *Romans* who should invade them, *shall destroy the city*, *and the sanctuary*, *and the end thereof shall be with a flood*, viz. of *Romans* overpowering them, *and unto the end of the war desolations are determined*, that is, by that time this War ends, the desolation of the miserable *Jews* shall be consummated, *Dan.* 9. 26. Yea, to this he adds another most conspicuous sign, *viz.* that after *Messiah* was once come, the *Sacrifices of the Law* should all cease among them. *Seventy weeks*,

says the Angel, *are determined upon thy people, to anoint the most holy, and to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins*; that is, in the † usual Phrase of Scripture, and of the *Jews*, of *sin-offerings* or *sacrifices for sins*, which were to pass off when once *Messiah*, by the Sacrifice of himself, had fulfilled all that was typified by them, *verse* 24. And this has been most notoriously verified upon them. For by their Law, they were to have but *one Altar*, and were to * *bring all their sacrifices* from all places of the Land, to the *temple* in *Jerusalem*; and so were never to worship God with Sacrifice, when they were out of their own Nation. And accordingly, they have never sacrificed at all since they were driven out of their own Country, and both the Temple, and City were laid waste by *Titus Vespasian*, which happened within *forty* Years after the offering up of our Saviour *Christ* in his Crucifixion.

† Lev. 4. 3, 25, 29. & 5. 6. & Psal. 40. 6. in all which for sin-offering the *Septuagint* use ἁμαρτία. & 2 Cor. 5. 21.

* Deut. 12. 11, 13, 14.

Quest. All these signs are so publick and conspicuous, as must needs force themselves upon all Mens observation. And being all near the time, they sufficiently direct Men when about to look for this Great Person. But are there no Predictions more punctual in point of Time still, and that prefix the exact Year of his coming?

Ans. Yes, the Prophet *Daniel* foretels the very *Year*, both of his *Manifestation*, and of his *Death* and *Passion*: that the former should happen 483. and the latter 486 Years

Years after the iſſuing out of the Decree to rebuild, not the *Temple*, but the *city and the walls of Jeruſalem. Know therefore, and underſtand*, ſaith the *Angel*, *that from the going forth of the commandment to reſtore and build Jeruſalem, unto Meſſiah the Prince*, that is, to his manifeſtation, which begun at his *Baptiſm*, when he firſt drew Diſciples after him, *ſhall be ſeven weeks, and threeſcore and two weeks*, in all ſixty nine Weeks or Septenaries of *Years*, oppoſite to *weeks of days* mentioned *Dan.* 10. 2. which makes Four hundred eighty three Years, at the expiration whereof he ſhould come among them, *Dan.* 9. 25. This punctually marks out the Year 484. for the Year of his *manifeſtation*. And then as for his *Paſſion*, that he ſays ſhall fall out in the *week following*, nay, in the *middle of the week*, that is about three Years and a half after, or in the *fourth* Year from the manifeſtation, which will be the Four hundred eighty ſeventh Year from the granting out the Decree to rebuild *Jeruſalem. And after* the ſeven weeks, and the *threeſcore and two weeks*, that is the ſixty nine weeks, are ended, and ſo the ſeventieth Week or Septenary of Years is begun, *ſhall Meſſiah be cut off*, verſe 26. Yea, he ſhall be cut off in the middle of that Week. For *he ſhall confirm the covenant with many for one week*, that is in the ſeventieth Week, when he begun his Preaching, whereby many were converted; *and in the midſt of the week, he ſhall cauſe the ſacrifice and oblation to ceaſe*,

cease, that is, put an end to all the *Jewish* Sacrifices, by the Sacrifice of himself, *verse* 27.

Quest. These Predictions are as express, and determinate in point of time, as can be spoken; but did the *Manifestation*, and *Crucifixion* of *Jesus*, fall out punctually according to this time?

Ans. Yes, as some * learned examiners of time do note, to a Year in both of them. For *the command to rebuild Jerusalem*, not only the *temple*, but *the street and the wall*, as the Prophet specifies it, *verse* 25. was *in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes*, as *Nehemiah* relates, *Neh.* 2. 1, 5, 6, 7, 8. There was a Decree, indeed, to rebuild the *Temple*, given before by * *Cyrus*, and another by † *Darius Hystaspis*, and so again by * *Artaxerxes Longimanus* in the seventh Year of his Reign, as appears by the Book of *Ezra*. But that for rebuilding *the city and wall*, which the Prophet is careful to specifie here, was not, as *Nehemiah* expressly says, till the *twentieth year of Artaxerxes*. Which, after the likeliest, and best grounded * computation, as I think, that begins his Reign in the second Year of the 77 *Olympiad*, fell out in the Year of the World according to † *Helvicus* 3498. Now beginning

* *Lydiat Emend. temp.* &c. An account of whose method, and reasons, may be seen in Dr. *More's* Expos. of *Daniel's* Visions, on Vis. 4. p. 120, &c.

* Ezra 1. 1, 2, 3.
† Ezra 6. 1, &c.
* Ezra 7. 1, 8, 12, 13, &c.

* *Lydiat Emend. temp.* p. 69, &c. *& Canon. Chron.* p. 54, &c.

† In Mr. *Lydiat's* Calculation of the Worlds Age, a point differently fixed by most Chronologers, whilst they agree in the other Calculations, the twentieth year from the second Ol. 77. is made *A. M.* 3553.

ning with this Year, and reckoning 69 Weeks, or 483 Years, the time predicted to expire before *Messiah*'s manifestation, the Year ensuing for him to appear in, makes the fourth Year of the 202 *Olympiad*, which is the Year of the World 3981. and the nineteenth Year of *Tiberius*. And this falls to be *the thirtieth Year of Christ*'s Age, according to what I judge the *faireſt Account of his *Birth* (*viz.* that which fixes it in the third Year of the 195th. *Olympiad*, which fell upon the †41ſt. Year of *Auguſtus*, and the Year of the World 3952.) and is that very Year of his Life, wherein, after the manner of the *Levites*, who at **thirty years* old begun their Service, S. *Luke* ſays our Lord was †*Baptized*, and begun his Preaching, *Luke* 3. 21, 23. And reckoning to the 487th. Year, the time prefixed for his Paſſion, it makes the third Year of the 203d. *Olympiad*, and the 22d. of *Tiberius*, the very Year, according to the ſeemingly *exacteſt calculation of times, of our Saviour's Crucifixion. So that the *Apoſtles* had the greateſt reaſon to declare of *Chriſt's coming*, that it was *when the fulneſs of time was come*, Gal. 4. 4 thereby denoting, not only the moſt proper Seaſon, but the exact

* See *Lydiat Emend. Tim.* p. 134 *&ſeq.*

† According to the *Æra Hiſpan. in Tom. Concil.* though according to the common computation 'tis 45.

* Num. 4. 3.

† For Chriſt's Baptiſm in the 19. *Tib.* ſee *Lydiat Emend. Tim.* p. 168. *&ſeq.*

* *Lydiat, ib. p.* 176. *&ſeq.* And of all theſe particulars more largely in his *Recenſio & Explicat. Argum. Lib. Emend. Tim.*

act Time and Year, which was predicted of him.

Quest. This is a wonderful exactness in prefixing the time of *Messiah*'s coming, which being so punctually fulfilled in *Jesus Christ*, must needs conclude undeniably for him, unless some other pretender appeared in that Year to contest it with him. But since they were so particularly informed about the time, how came it, that as it drew on, the *Jews* were not daily looking for him?

Ans. They were all full of expectation, about the time our Saviour came. For at his Birth, *Simeon was waiting for the consolation of Israel*, Luke 2. 25. *Anna* also at the same time, when she saw him, *spoke of him to all those, that looked for redemption in Jerusalem*, verse 38. So full of expectation were the People in those days, that they were ready to give ear to every pretender, running after *Thendas*, and *Judas*, as *Gamaliel* reports, *Acts* 5. 36, 37; and after several others, as is related by * *Josephus*. Nay, so near was their expectation, and so apt were they to fix that Character on some; that if a Man were extraordinary, and of great Name, though he did not pretend to be the *Messiah*, yet of themselves they were ready to surmise it of him. And thus they did of * *John* the *Baptist*: for when he appeared to be an extraordinary Person, *they sent Priests and Levites to him, to know whether he was the Christ: and he confessed,*

* *Antiq. l.* 20. *c.* 6, 7.

† Luke 3. 15, 16.

confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ, John 1. 19, 20. Nay, this expectation they did not keep as a secret among themselves, but boasted of it in all places where they lived, and filled the *Greeks*, and *Romans* with it. *An opinion had then prevailed over all the East, grown up to be both old and constant, that God had decreed at that time to raise up one out of Judea, to the empire of the world*; says *Suetonius* in the * *Life of Vespasian*. So that as the Holy Prophets had given them just reason, both *Jews*, and *Gentiles* were in full expectation of *Messiah*, and then it was that our Saviour *Christ* came. He was manifested ere the Scepter was departed, for in his days, and for some time after, the *Jewish* Nation were a Body Politick, and lived under a form of Government: and while the second Temple stood, for he daily conversed, and taught in it: and ere the City and Temple were destroyed, and thereby their Sacrifices all at an end, which was not till the destruction of *Jerusalem*, almost forty Years after he was Crucified. In summ, he was manifested exactly at the end of the sixty nine Weeks, in the 19th. of *Tiberius*, and suffered in the midst of the 70th. Week, which fell out in the 22d. of *Tiberius*, as the Prophet *Daniel* had punctually fore told of him. And the days of *Messiah* falling so exactly upon him, and upon no other Person, 'tis undeniably clear that he is the Man.

† *Sut. in Vesp. c. 4.*

Quest.

Quest. But though God expresly promised to send *Messiah* at that prefix'd time, yet might he not put it off for the sins of the People, which rendred them utterly unworthy of so great a Blessing?

Ans. No, for those sins were fore-told at the same time, and yet his coming promised notwithstanding them. * *Isaiah* represents the Men of *Messiah*'s Age, as an Infidel and hard-hearted Generation, that *would not believe his report*, but *hide their faces from him* in the extremity of his affliction; * *Jeremy*, as having *made void God's former covenant*, and therefore needing *a second* to be introduced by him; † *Malachi*, as having lost even *natural affection between Parents and Children*, which *Elias* must go before to restore among them; * *Daniel*, as persevering under his appearance to sin on, and provoke God to that height, as would cause him shortly after to cut them off, and *destroy both the City, and the Sanctuary*, by a most just and terrible judgment. Nay, so far were the sins of the People, from being an hindrance to his coming in the sight of God, that, as the Prophets plainly declare, they were to be the cause and reason of it. The coming, or *anointing of the most holy*, says *Daniel*, is *to make an end of sins* or sin-offerings, and *make reconciliation for iniquity*, Dan. 9. 24. *to offer up his soul an offering for sin, to bear the iniquity of us all, to be wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, that through his stripes*

* Isa. 53. 1, 3.

* Jer. 31. 31, 32, 33.

† Mal. 4. 5, 6.

* Dan. 9. 26, 27.

we may be healed, says *Isaiah* 53. 5, 6, 8, 10. His coming was to be for the expiation of sin, *to open a fountain to the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin, and for uncleanness*, Zech. 13. 1. And coming thus to expiate, and cure sin; there is no more reason to stay him beyond the time, because sin grows strong, than, in the increase of a Disease, to delay the use of Remedies, or stop the coming of the Physician.

Quest. But doth not God say, *when he speaks of building up*, or exalting *any Nation, if they do evil in his sight, he will repent of the good, wherewith he said he would benefit them*, Jer. 18. 9, 10.

Ans. Yes, and so he doth in all those Promises, which he makes upon Mens supposed virtues, and on condition of their good carriage. But the Promise of *Messiah* was absolute, and intended, as appears, on no such prospect. For God declared he should come among a People full of sin, and instead of being deferred by their wickedness, should be sent because of it, to atone and heal it. Besides, if only the Fathers sins had stopped his coming, their Posterities Repentance would have removed that impediment, and have brought him down; which they see for above this 1600 Years, it has not done.

Quest. I see the ancient Prophecies declare *Jesus* to be *the Christ*, by prefixing the exact time of his coming: wherein they are

are so particular, and punctual, as might suffice in a History of things already past. But I pray before you leave this point, of the exactness of time, how can the *Jews*, who believe all these Prophecies, shut their Eyes against them?

Ans. The elder *Jews*, who lived before *Christ*, did see them, as appears from their general expectation of him about that time, and from what the *learned* * *Grotius* relates of *Rabbi Nehumias*, who living fifty Years before *Jesus Christ* came, declared, that within fifty Years *Messiah* must come, because in that time *Daniel*'s Weeks prefixt for him were to determine. But as for the later *Jews*, who lived since our Saviour, they turn by all of them by one rule, whereby at their pleasure they may turn by any thing, that is, by not medling at all with them, nor suffering any to interpret, or collect the time of his coming from them. This is the meaning of that severe *Anathema*, which * some have noted from the *Thalmud*, *Let his puft up Bones burst, that shall meddle in computing the periods of times.* And accordingly the rule of the great *Maimonides*, their *second Moses*, concerning the *days of Messiah*, is, *to believe surely that he will come, and if he prove slow, still to expect him, and never to fix him any time, or so to explain any Texts of Scripture, as to infer the time of his appearance from them.*

* *De Verit.* l. 5. c. 14.

* *Vid. Episcop. Instit.* l. 3. c. 5.

Quest.

Queſt. That, indeed, is a clear reaſon; for the plaineſt words can never convince thoſe, that will not read, or underſtand them. But beſides that the ancient Prophecies prove *Jeſus* to be *Chriſt*, by *preſcribing the exact time of his coming*, you ſaid alſo, that they demonſtrate it further, by *aſſigning many peculiar, and moſt viſible notes, whereby he may be demonſtratively pointed out from all other Men.* What are thoſe peculiar, and notable marks, whereby they ſo effectually deſcribe him?

Anſ. They are certain eminent, and moſt obſervable things, *belonging to him*, or to *be performed by him, which*, as they were moſt *viſible* in him, ſo were *peculiarly* his, and never found in any other Man.

Queſt. What things are thoſe, which were ſo notable in him, and peculiarly belonging to him?

Anſ. Not only that he ſhould be born of the *lineage of David*, Iſaiah 11. 1, 10. and in *the city Bethlehem*, Mic. 5. 2. which, eſpecially in conjunction with the exact time before-deſcribed, are very diſcovering circumſtances, to the time when, adding the very Family, and Place where he ſhould be born, that all might know the very Town, and Kindred, amongſt whom in that Year they were to ſeek for him. But more particularly, that he ſhould be ſet off by theſe ſigns following.

Queſt. What are they?

Ans. First, That he should *be born of a Virgin*, which was a thing never known before, or since, and so was sure to point him out demonstratively from all other Men. *Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son*, saith God by the Prophet *Isaiah, and shall call his name Immanuel*, Isaiah 7. 14.

Quest. But the word, which is there rendred *Virgin*, say the *Jews*, may signifie only a *young Woman*, denoting her *Age*, not *Condition:* and then this having in it nothing peculiar, can be no proof to him?

Ans. It doth not appear that it signifies any thing else in Scripture, but a *Virgin*, the * place alledg'd for a laxer sense, well admitting that interpretation. But if it did, it must needs signifie a *Virgin*, that is, one *that has not known man*, in this place. For not only *the Septuagint*, that were all *Jews*, and lived long before our Saviour, translate it *Virgin:* but this conception is here given for a *sign*, or a miraculous thing; which would be none at all, were it spoken only of a *young Woman*; especially among the *Jews*, * *whose custom* it was most early to contract their Daughters, and Marry them, as soon as their Age would suffer them. When *Achaz* refused *to tempt the Lord in asking a sign, the Lord himself*, says *Isaiah, shall give you a sign. Behold! a virgin shall conceive*, &c. verse 12, 14.

* Prov. 30. 18, 19.

* *Vid Seld. ux. Heb.* l. 2. c. 3.

Quest.

Quest. This shews it was spoken of some Virgin. But yet may it not be understood, as the *Jews* say, of some one, that only was a Virgin at the time of the Prophet's speaking, who before she could lose her Virginity, conceive a Son, and the Child come to any understanding, God would work the deliverance which they desired of him, as the *Prophet* declares, *verse* 16.

Ans. There is cause to think it was spoken of some such Person, who was present before the Prophet, and pointed out by him, at the time of this Prediction. For in the *Original*, it is not Behold *a Virgin*, but *that Virgin shall conceive*, as if he had particularly marked out the Person to them. And *before the child* to be born of her, *shall know how to refuse the evil, and chuse the good, the land that thou abhorrest*, saith he, *shall be forsaken of both her kings*, that is, *of* * *Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah king of Israel*, who at that time were their invaders. And this accordingly came to pass. For in the *twentieth Year* from the beginning of *Jotham's Reign*, whereof *sixteen* were elapsed before *Achaz* came to succeed him, and which therefore must fall within two, or three whole Years at most from the time of this Prediction, in which space, the Child but then conceiv'd could not be grown up to Years of understanding, *Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, slew Rezin*, and *Hoshea slew Pekah*, as we read 2 *Kings* 15. 30, 32, 33. & 16. 9.

* Verse 1.

But although, as I say, this Prophecy had some respect to a Virgin of that time, yet did it look beyond her to a Virgin, that remaining such, should conceive *Messiah*, and was never fulfilled till he came.

Quest. How doth it appear, that it was not fulfilled in the Virgin pointed out at that time?

Ans. Because the most noted things in that Prophecy, were left unaccomplished then, particularly these following:

First, The conceiving of this Virgin, is made a *miraculous* conception, and is given to the House of *Judah* for a *sign*, as I noted, *verse* 11, 12, 14. And this must be meant of her conceiving, remaining still a Virgin. For, for one that is now a Virgin, to Marry, and after that conceive, is no miraculous, nor strange thing.

Secondly, The Child *Immanuel*, to be born of this Virgin, was to be *Master of the Land of Judah*, which the Prophet therefore calls *thy land, O Immanuel!* Isaiah 8. 8. And this was not fulfilled in the Virgins Child of that time. That Child the *Jews* make to be *Achaz*'s *Son*, viz. *Hezekiah*, who was afterwards *King* of *Judah*. But he was born several Years before this Prophecy, which cannot therefore speak of conceiving him. For the Prophet is expressly said to come with this Message to *king Achaz*, verse 1, 3. a clear evidence of its falling some time in *his Reign*. Now *he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem*, 2 Kings 16. 2. and then

then left *Hezekiah* his Son to ſucceed him. And *Hezekiah*, ſays the *Scripture, was twenty five years old, when he began to reign*, 2 Kings 18. 2. So that he muſt needs have been eight or nine Years old, when his Father *Achaz* aſcended to the *Throne*. The Child here promiſed then, could not be *Hezekiah*, who was afterwards *King*; but very probably was the Prophets own Son, who lived and died a private Man: ſo that this part, of being *Maſter of the Land of Judah*, could not be fulfilled in him.

Queſt. Had the Prophet a Son born to him preſently after that time?

Anſ. Yes, and that, 'tis like, by a Virgin, whom, at the time of his Prediction, he either had eſpouſed, or deſigned to eſpouſe to himſelf. *I went in unto the Propheteſs*, ſaith he, proceeding on ſtill in the ſame Prediction, *and ſhe conceived, and bare a ſon*, Iſaiah 8. 3.

Queſt. But how doth this Son appear to be the ſame *Immanuel*, that was promiſed to be *born of a Virgin*? Chap. 7.

Anſ. Firſt, Becauſe he has the *ſame Name*. By which I do not mean, that he was noted by the ſame word, but by one that implies what the other expreſſed, and ſignifies the ſame with it, which is the ſame Name in Scripture account. For the *Virgins ſon*, chap. 7. was *to be called Immanuel*, that is, *God with us*, to note God's Favour and Preſence, *verſe* 14. And the Prophet is ordered to call his Son *Maher-ſhalal-haſh-baz*,

that is, one *born to speed on the spoil*, and *haſten the prey*, chap. 8. 3. And this, though a different word, has the ſame virtue and effect with the other. For when a People are in any diſtreſs by Invaders, as the *Jews* were at the † time of this Promiſe, the effect of God's Favour and Preſence, is to give them Conqueſt, and Spoil over their Enemies. And this anſwering the virtue and effect of a Name, is called the having that Name in Scripture. Thus it is frequently in the Holy Prophets, as in (*a*) *Iſaiah*, (*b*) *Jeremy*, (*c*) *Ezekiel*, (*d*) *Zechary*. And thus *Chriſt*'s being called *Immanuel*, that is, *God with us*, *was fulfilled*, ſaith S. *Matthew*, when *he was called Jeſus*, that is a Saviour, becauſe God's Kindneſs and Preſence, is moſt eminently ſhown and brought to effect, in the Salvation and Deliverance of his Servants, *Matth.* 1. 21, 22, 23.

† Chap. 7. 1.

(*a*) Iſa. 1. 26. & 62. 4.
(*b*) Jer. 3. 17.
(*c*) Ezek. 48. 35.
(*d*) Zec. 8. 3.

Secondly, Becauſe the Prophets Son was made a *ſign for the ſame thing*, viz. the deliverance of the *Jews* from theſe two invading Princes, in leſs time, than would ſuffice him to attain to any underſtanding. *Before the* Virgins *child*, ſays the Prophet, *chap. 7. ſhall know to refuſe the evil, and chuſe the good*, that is, before he can attain to diſtinguiſh between good and bad, *the land that thou abhorreſt*, viz. the Land of † *Syria* and *Iſrael*, now become hateful to the *Jews* for theſe their inrodes, *ſhall be forſaken* or deprived *of both her kings*, verſe 16. And *before the Prophets child*, ſays the relation,

† Verſe 1.

chap.

chap. 8. *shall have knowledge to cry my Father, and my Mother, the riches of Damascus* the *metropolis* of *Syria, and the spoil of Samaria* the * *capital* place of the King of *Israel, shall be taken away before the king of Assyria,* verse 4. In both which places, there is an evident promise of the same thing, *viz.* the destruction of these two Kings, and that within the same space of time, *viz.* before the Child then promised could attain to the Age of any understanding. So that the Virgins Child referred to in the Prophets time, was most probably the Prophets own Son. And he not being of Royal Race, but living and dying, as I said, a private Person, 'tis plain this part of the *Prophecy,* viz. *the childs being master of the land of Judah,* could not be fulfilled in him.

* Chap. 7. 8, 9.

Quest. Have you any more things to instance in, which shew this Prophecy was not fulfilled in the Virgins Child of that time?

Ans. Yes, *Thirdly,* Because the Virgins Child in that promise is adorned with the *glorious Titles,* and *plain Characters of Messiah.* For in further pursuit of God's Promise in this Child, and the deliverance by him, in the ninth *Chapter* the Prophet cries out triumphantly, *Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*

Of the increase of his government, and peace, there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order, and to establish it, with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever, verse 6, 7. Now this Person, whose Title and Character is *Wonderful, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace*, and *whose government on the throne of David was to be perpetually increasing*, is plainly no other but *Messiah*. And he being the Person promised by *Isaiah*, to *be born of a Virgin*, that Prophecy, however answered in some parts before, could never be fulfilled and accomplished, but in him.

Quest. But you said before, it had respect to the Virgins Son of that time, and was in part effected then. And if it must still be meant of *Christ*, and made good in him again some hundreds of Years after, this makes the same words to be designed for several meanings, yea, such as must be verified at far distant times, which seems a strange thing?

Ans. This is most usual in the *Scriptures*, and especially in Prophecies, which are often spoken of one Person next in view and near at hand, in whom they are fulfilled in part; but of another further off, who, though he lies hid till he is shown by the event, is yet the Person chiefly meant, whereof the other was only a *Figure* or *Type*, and in whom they are fully to be accomplished. Thus God's Promise to *David*,

2 Sam.

2 Sam. 7. 12, &c. Of *ſetting up his ſeed for ever after him, and* ſaying, *I will be his Father, and he ſhall be my Son*, though it were ſpoken immediately, and in part of *Solomon*, as is moſt apparent, yet was chiefly intended, and fully made good in † *Chriſt*. And the words of *David*, about God's *not leaving his ſoul in hell*, &c. *Pſal.* 16. 8, 9, 10. though ſeemingly ſpoken, and in part verified of his own Perſon, were yet meant, and fully accompliſhed in *Chriſt*'s *Reſurrection*, whereto S. *Peter* applies them, *Act.* 2. 29, &c. And ſo when *God ſaid unto him, Thou art my ſon*, and *I will give thee the Heathen*, Pſal. 2. 7, 8. which had its full effect in *Chriſt*, according to S. *Paul*'s interpretation, *Act.* 13. 33. And the ſame S. *Matthew* aſſures us of the Virgins Son, which though it might have ſome regard to a Child of that time, yet was then only *fulfilled*, when *Chriſt* came, *Matth.* 1. 21, 22, 23. † Heb. 1. 5.

Queſt. But if this Virgins bearing a Son, be meant of *Chriſt*, How could it be given to *Achaz*, and the Houſe of *Judah*, for a *ſign*, ſince he was then afar off, and not to come till long after that Generation?

Anſ. Becauſe it was meant of another too, who was to be conceived at that very time, and would prove a *ſign to them*. And as this inferiour accompliſhment, would be a ſign of this anſwerable Deliverance in that Age: ſo would the miraculous Birth of *Chriſt*, when it ſhould more eminently fulfil

fulfil this Prophecy, be a much more illustrious sign, of an incomparably greater, to their Successors. And this also answers the end of its being given here for a *sign*, which is not limited to any Person, or Time, but indefinite, to the *House of David*. *Hear*, says the Prophet, not *O! Ahaz*, but *O! house of David*, &c. *verse* 13, 14. Besides, in *Ahaz*'s time, the Faith of *Christ*'s being born of a Virgin whilst only promised, would give it the virtue of a sign, as well as the sight of it when performed. The end of it was to assure them, that the *Kings* of *Syria*, and *Israel*, should not prevail against them, *verse* 4, 7, 9, 10. And this, if they believed it, 'twas apt to do, as an argument from God's intending for them a greater kindness, to his readiness in performing a less: for sending *Messiah* to be *born of a Virgin*, and to be *God with us*, must argue a greater power and kindness, than would suffice to work this deliverance from these invading Princes. And after all, it is not unusual in the Scriptures, to beget Faith and confidence, by such signs, as are remote and far off, as God did to *Moses*, Exod. 3. 12. and to *Hezekiah* and the *Jews*, Isaiah 37. 30.

Quest. By this I perceive this Prophecy, of a *Virgin bearing a Son*, was intended of *Messiah*. But was it fulfilled in *Jesus* when he came?

Ans. Yes, most miraculously. For his Mother that bare him, was a pure Virgin,

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as appeared both from her own account, and *Joseph*'s her reputed Husband, both Persons of known Integrity, and unquestionable Credit. And when after her espousal, *Joseph* doubted of her Chastity, because *she was found with Child before their coming together*, an *Angel* is dispatched from Heaven to clear her Honour, and to assure him, that what was conceived in her, was not any Humane Production, *but of the Holy Ghost*, Matth. 1. 18, 19, 20. *The Holy Ghost*, as another *Angel* explained it to her self, *coming upon her, and the power of the Highest overshadowing her*, when she objected the *impossibility* of her being a Mother, because *she was a pure maid*, Luke 1. 34, 35. All which was so unquestionable, and notoriously made out to the *Apostles*, and *Primitive Christians*, their greatest Enemies finding no pretence to cavil, and start doubts upon it, that they universally and firmly believed it, and thought it a point of so great account, as to deserve a place, and make one Article, in that short Summary and Abridgment of Christian Faith, called the *Apostles Creed*. For in that, one thing we profess to believe concerning *Jesus* is, That being *conceived by the Holy Ghost, he was born of the Virgin Mary*.

Quest. No wonder it found a place there, for it is a sign, not more strange than convincing, being of it self alone sufficient to prove *Jesus* to be the *Christ*, since in this he has no Competitors, the like, I think, being

being never known, or pretended of any other Man. But besides this, are there not other notable things set down by the Prophets, as *belonging to him*, which may serve still further to discover him?

Ans. Yes, *Secondly*, That an *extraordinary Spirit*, not only of *Wisdom* and *Goodness*, but also of *Might* or *miraculous Power*, should not only descend now and then by fits, but make a settled abode, and *rest upon him.* Concerning *the branch, that shall grow out of the root of Jesse*, says the Prophet, *the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord*, Isaiah 11. 1, 2. And when once the former Prophecies had pointed out the exact Year, and place of his appearing, this sign of it self had been enough to discover him. For being thus extraordinary, not only for Wisdom and Piety, but also for Might and miraculous Power, when any would survey all the Men in *Bethlehem* in search of *Messiah* at the prefixed time, he infinitely, above all others, must needs draw all Mens Eyes to him.

Quest. Are there any more things still belonging to him, which confirm the same?

Ans. Yes, *Thirdly*, That he should be *cut off as a Malefactor* by corrupt Judgment, noting the main circumstances both previous and concomitant, and the particular, and

and then unuſual manner of his puniſhment. And that after his Death, he ſhould *return from the Grave*, and appear alive again. All this the *Pſalmiſt*, and the *Holy Prophets*, plainly foretel of him. *When we ſhall ſee him*, ſays *Iſaiah*, it will be *without form, or comelineſs: he is deſpiſed, and rejected of men*, Iſaiah 53. 2, 3. He is to be betrayed, and *ſold* to his Adverſaries *for thirty pieces of ſilver*, Zach. 11. 12. And when he is in their Hands, he ſhall be *judged* as a *priſoner*, Iſaiah 53. 8. his *back ſhall be ſcourged*, and *his face ſhall be ſpit on*, Iſaiah 50. 6. He ſhall be *tried* and *condemned*, and *cut off out of the land of the living*, Iſa. 53. 8. And as for the manner of his Death, that ſhall be by the *piercing of his hands and feet*, and keeping his Body between them ſo at ſtretch, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, that *they may tell all his bones*; a plain deſcription of a Death on the Croſs, which being a *Roman* puniſhment, and brought in among the *Jews* by their Conqueſt, muſt needs be unknown in *David*'s Age, and ſo more obſervable, to be foretold by him ſo many hundred Years before, in deſcribing the ſufferings of *Meſſiah*. Beſides, under this Execution, they relate the *very words*, wherein *he* ſhould expreſs the bitterneſs of his Sorrows, and wherein the *ſtarers on* would vent their cruel Scoffs, and how they ſhould ſeek to ſharpen his Pains by a *draught of* * *vinegar*, and *pierce* or thruſt him through, as † *Zechary* declared in a *Text*, which the old *Rabbins*

* Pſ. 69. 21.

† Zech. 12. 10.

Rabbins applied to *Christ*, and when he was Dead, *share his garment* by *casting Lots* for it. *They pierced my hands and my feet, I may tell all my bones, they part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Whilst they stare upon me, and laugh me to scorn, saying, He trusted in God that he would deliver him, let him deliver him if he delight in him*, says the *Psalmist*, Psalm 22. 1, 7, 8, 16, 17, 18. Which *Psalm*, and these passages of it, according to the Letter, never fully verified in the Story of *David*, after the *Jews* of *old*, the *New Testament* applies to *Christ*, *Matth.* 27. 35, 43, 46. & *John* 19. 24. These *places* evidently foretel the method of his *Death* and *Humiliation*. And then after Death, the same Prophets as evidently foretel, that he should not lie to * *see corruption*, but *return from the grave*, to a long, happy, and successful Life. When *he shall make his Soul an offering for Sin, he shall prolong his days*; so that after his dying as a Sacrifice, he was to be a live Man. Nay, *the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied*; so that he was also to be an active, undertaking, and successful Man, *verse* 10. yea, *I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong*; that is, be most Wealthy, Potent, and Victorious amongst Men, *verse* 12. All which long, active, and happy Life, was to be bestowed on him, not only after his

*Ps. 16. 10.

his Death, but as a recompence and reward of it. *He shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors*, that is, was condemned and executed in the herd of Malefactors, *verse* 12.

Quest. I see all this was plainly prophesied of *Messiah*, and was it fully made good in *Jesus Christ*?

Ans. Yes, For he appeared in a poor and despicable condition, as a * *carpenter's son.* He was *sold* by his own Servant † *for thirty pieces of silver*, which did the *Traytor* no good, but by an over-ruling Providence was *cast to the Potter*, or to * buy the *Potters Field* for a Burying place, as *Zechary* had foretold. He was put in Bonds as a *Prisoner*, and led about before † *the high-priest, Herod*, and the *Roman Governour*. They * *scourged* him, and † *spit* upon him, they *condemned* and *cut him off*, according to the word of *Isaiah*, not only as a Malefactor, but also in company with them, executing him † *between two thieves*, as the *Evangelists* relate of him. And as for the manner of his Death, though Crucifixion was no *Jewish*, but a *Roman* Punishment, and after the *High-Priest* had pronounced him *guilty of* * *Blasphemy*, by the constitution of the *Jews* and the † *Law of Moses*, he should have been *stoned*: yet by the special ordering of God, he suffered by the *piercing of his hands and feet*, and hanging so at stretch upon the Tree, that his *bones might be numbered*, according

* Matth. 13. 55. Mar. 6. 3.
† Matth. 26. 15.
* Mat. 27. 7.
† Luk. 22. & chap. 23.
* Jo. 19. 1.
† Matth. 26. 67.
* Mar. 15. 27, 28.
* Matth. 26. 65.
† Lev. 24. 16.

according to the words of *David*. In his extremities, though the custom of the Nation was to offer stupefactives, as *Wine and Myrrh*, to benum the Sense, and ease the pains of dying Persons; yet to verifie the saying of the *Psalmist*, they brought him * *Vinegar*, to whet and sharpen his. The *chief Priests, with the Scribes and Elders*, most inhumanly *staring* on him, said with cruel scorn, *He † trusted in God, let him deliver him now if he will have him*, the very words, which the Holy *Psalmist* had so long before set down for them: and he himself cried out, * *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* The very words again, which that Holy *Prophet* spoke for him in his extremity. As he hung upon the Cross, a Soldier † *pierced his side*, and thrust him through, to fulfil the words of *Zechary*. And when they saw he had expired, the *four Soldiers* that stood by, and were to share his Cloathes, would *not divide his seamless coat*, but * *cast lots for it*, according to the Prediction of the *Psalmist*. Amidst all which strange congruities, he had one other qualifying circumstance, which the Prophet *Isaiah* remarks, *viz.* to *make his grave*, as *with the wicked*, by dying for a pretended crime, so *with the rich in his death*, Isaiah 53. 9 which was verified, by his being *wrapt in fine linen*, and Entombed, as by his care, so in † *Joseph of Arimathea's own Sepulchre*, who was *a* * *rich man*, and an † *honourable counsellor*. And then as for his

* John 19. 28, 29. & Matth 27. 34, 48.
† Matth. 27. 41, 43.
* Matth. 27. 46.
† John 19. 34.
* John 19. 23, 24.
† Matth. 27. 60.
* Matth. 27. 57.
† Mark 15. 43.

his *return to life again*, to be an *undertaking*, *ſucceſsful*, and moſt *potent*, *happy* Perſon: that has been moſt notoriouſly, and eminently made good, in our Bleſſed Saviour's Reſurrection, and in the unparalleled ſucceſs of his Religion in all places ſince that time. And this again, eſpecially his *Reſurrection*, is another note, which as it fits *Jeſus* to be the *Meſſiah*, ſo beyond diſpute excludes all other Men. For though *Theudas*, and *Judas*, as *Gamaliel** obſerved, and other *falſe Chriſts*, in juſt reward of their Impoſtures, have been condemned and ſlain; yet was never any of them ſeen to return to life again, to carry on their pretences, and to proſper and thrive in them. * Act. 5. 36, 37.

Queſt. Have you any other notable, and appropriating marks to add from them, to theſe already given?

Anſ. Yes, *Fourthly*, That he ſhould *put an end to the* Jewiſh *Sacrifices*, and to the *Covenant brought in by* Moſes, by reaſon of its imperfection; and inſtead thereof, make a *new*, and *more Gracious and Perfect Covenant*, *between God and Men.* And this being a moſt publick change, and aboliſhing an Inſtitution moſt peculiarly diſtinguiſhed, and univerſally eyed and taken notice of among Men, it muſt needs be a convincing ſign, and ſuch, as all might eaſily ſee, and obſerve when it came. When *Meſſiah* comes, ſaith the Prophet *Daniel*, he ſhall *make an end of ſin-offerings*, and *cauſe the* Moſaical

saical *Sacrifices and Oblations to cease*, Dan. 9. 24 27. *Behold! the days come, saith the Lord*, by *Jeremiah*, *that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and Judah*, Jer. 31. 31. Which days are plainly the *days of Messiah*, noted *verse* 22. who was to be *the Messenger or Angel of the Covenant*, answerable to the *Angel of God's Presence* among the *Jews*, by *whose* * *ministry* he established the *Mosaick Covenant*, as *Malachy* foretold, *Mal.* 3. 1. And this Covenant was to offer more large Indulgence, and richer Overtures of Grace, which would make it a Message *of joy*, as † *Zechary*; a *publication of Peace, and Salvation*, a *bringing glad tidings of good*, a *binding up of broken hearts, and proclaiming liberty to the Captives, and preaching the acceptable year of the Lord*, as * *Isaiah*: it was to *forgive iniquity*, as † *Jeremy*; *making reconciliation* for it, as * *Daniel*; *opening a fountain* to wash away *sin and uncleanness*, as † *Zechary* says.

* Exod. 23. 20, 21. Gal. 3. 19.

†Zech 9. 9.

* Is. 52. 7. & 61. 1, 2. †Jer. 31. 34. *Dan. 9. 24 †Zech. 13. 1.

Quest. And did Jesus fulfil all this?

Ans. Yes, he hath taken off the yoke of *Moses*, and *abolished all its Ordinances, nailing them unto his Cross*, Col. 2. 14. He hath fulfilled all former, and superseded all later Sacrifices, by *once offering that one Sacrifice of himself*, Heb. 9. 25, 26. He hath brought in a *new Covenant*, the Laws whereof have more root in our own Reason, called their being * *writ in our hearts and minds*; which makes them the *easier to be remembred*, as *Moses* is brought in saying

* Jer. 31. 33. & Heb. 8. 10.

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ing † *the Laws of Messiah* should be, according to an *old Tradition* of the *Rabbies*: and the Mercy whereof extends to the forgiveness of more sins, as the *Prophets* foretold, than could be hoped for by the Law of *Moses*. For *Murder*, or *Adultery*, under that Law, God admitted of *no Sacrifice* to *bear any persons iniquity*, as may be seen in * *Leviticus*, and as *David* declares in *Uriah's* case, *Psal.* 51. 16. Nor for *Idolatry*, Deut. 17. 2, 3, &c. nor for *giving their seed to Molock*, nor for *seeking after Wizards*, nor for *cursing Parents*, nor for *Incest*, or *Sodomy*, or *Bestiality*, all which were *surely to be put to death* according to God's Ordinance, *Lev.* 20. 2, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16. Nor in general, for any *presumptuous offence*, the *iniquity* whereof, as the *Law* says, was not to be *laid upon any Sacrifice*, but to *rest upon themselves*, and they to *be utterly cut off*, Num. 15. 30, 31. and *die without mercy*, Heb. 10. 28. Nay, under it a *curse* was pronounced, not only to those, who were guilty of some certain offences, but, what was more hard to be avoided, *to all, who continued not in all points written in the Law, to do them*, Deut. 27. 26. & Gal. 3. 10. But for all these sins, unpardonable by the *Mosaick Covenant*, our Saviour, who, according to the Holy Prophets, was to bring in a fuller Pardon and Oblivion of sins, than before was offered, doth proclaim Pardon, on Mens true Repentance, by his *New Covenant*. By it, as S. *Paul* declares, *all that believe*,

† Mr. *Smith* of a Legal Right. *ch.* 2. out of *Breshith Rabba.*

* Lev. 20. 10.

lieve, are justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses, Act. 13. 38, 39.

Quest. Was he to do any more things besides this?

Ans. Yes, *Fifthly,* To *found a kingdom,* and *appear as a mighty Prince. The Government,* says *Isaiah, shall be upon his shoulder, and it shall increase without end upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order, and establish it, with justice and judgment, for ever,* Isaiah 9. 6, 7. And this Principality, they say, shall be, not over the *Jewish* Nation alone, to whom the *Church* of God had been confined aforetime: but over the *Gentiles* too, who should all come in, and submit to him. *The root of Jesse, which shall stand for an Ensign of the People, shall set up an Ensign for the Na-*
†Mal. 1. 11. *tions, and unto it shall the* † *Gentiles seek,* Isa. 11. 10, 12. *My servant shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles, I will give him for a covenant of the People, for a light of the Gentiles, for salvation to the ends of the earth,* Isaiah 42. 1, 6. & 49. 6. *To him whom man despiseth, Kings shall see and arise, Princes also shall worship. I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And Kings shall be thy nursing-fathers, and their Queens thy nursing-mothers: they shall bow down to thee, with their face towards the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet,* Isa. 49. 7, 22, 23.

Quest.

Queſt. If *Meſſiah* were to come as ſuch a Royal Prince, and erect an Univerſal Monarchy over all Nations; by that he might eaſily be known, and no Man would be at a loſs to diſcern *who is he*, when once this is done.

Anſ. No more, than they are at a loſs to know who is the *King of Great Britain*, the *German Emperour*, or the *Grand Signior*. Beſides the dependancies, that make ſo many concerned with them, the Quality and Greatneſs of ſuch Characters, is enough to make any Man known, and draw all Eyes upon him.

Queſt. And did *Jeſus* found ſuch a Kingdom?

Anſ. Yes, ſuch Kingly Power he claimed before *Pontius Pilate*, John 18. 37. And ſuch he exerciſes in the World. His Dominion, praiſed be God, goes beyond the *Jews*, and is ſpread far and wide among the *Nations*, whoſe Princes ſubmit their Scepters to his, and glory in being his Servants, and account being ſtiled *Defenders of the Faith*, *moſt Chriſtian*, or *Catholick Kings*, the very Flower of all their *Titles*.

Queſt. But how did he appear like ſuch a mighty Prince, ſince he made no pompous Entrance, with ſplendid Retinues, and ſtrong Guards; nor erected any Courts, to judge of Properties; nor liſted potent Armies, to repel Invaders; nor came furniſhed, either with rich Mannors and Preferments, to reward good Services; or with

visible and present Punishments, such as Confiscations, Prisons, Gibbets, to avenge the Transgressions of his Followers?

Ans. This, indeed, was the thing, that of all others was a *stumbling Block* to the *Jews*, who expected a *Secular Saviour*, a Prince in worldly Power, Pomp, and Greatness. But as to *Messiah's outward appearance*, the *Prophets* foretold quite contrary things. So did *Isaiah* among others, calling *Christ*, *him whom man despiseth, whom the nation abhorreth, a servant of rulers*, Isaiah 49. 7. *He shall grow up*, saith he in another place, *as a tender plant out of a dry ground, he hath no form nor comeliness, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised, and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and we hid as it were our faces from him*, being ashamed to own him, *Isaiah* 53. 2, 3. By these accounts, in outward appearance, he was to come more like a Peasant, than a Prince. But his Kingdom so much cried up, was to be Spiritual, giving Laws, not only to Overt-Acts, which are triable in Secular Courts, but to Mens Hearts and Consciences; protecting, and aiding them, by unseen Providences, and Spiritual Assistances; rewarding and punishing, not with Temporal, but Eternal Recompences; not medling with a Secular Domination, over Mens Persons, or Purses, in things relating to this Life, but leaving that Power in the same hands, where it was lodg'd before.

And

And ſuch a principality as this our Saviour claimed, telling *Pilate* he *was a King, but* that *his kingdom was not of this world*; for *if it had, his ſervants would have fought, to have delivered him from the Jews*, John 18. 36.

Queſt. Was *Meſſiah* to do any other notable thing, which would ſtill be a further manifeſtation of him?

Anſ. Yes, *Sixthly*, He was to *convert the Heathen world from their Idol-worſhip*, and make *Pagan-Idolatry* fall before him. *In that day*, ſaith *Iſaiah*, deſcribing *Chriſt*'s Kingdom both over *Jews* and * *Gentiles, the Lord alone ſhall be exalted, and the Idols ſhall he utterly aboliſh*, Iſaiah 2. 17, 18. *In that day*, ſays God by *Zechary*, *I will cut off the names of the Idols out of the land, and they ſhall no more be remembred*, Zech. 13. 2. *All nations* then *ſhall ſerve him, all nations ſhall call him bleſſed*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, Pſal. 72. 11, 17. * Verſe 2, 4

Queſt. Did *Jeſus* perform this when he came?

Anſ. Yes, he drave the proud Spirits out of their Temples, and ſilenced them in all their Oracles and other Divinations, and convinced the World, that thoſe they had hitherto worſhipped for Gods, were Devils, and that thoſe are no Gods, which are made with hands. And of this, there were ſo many inſtances, as there were of Heathen Men, and Heathen Nations, that turned Chriſtians.

Queſt. Thoſe Converts, indeed, are ſo many plain proofs of the overthrow of

visible and present Punishments, such as Confiscations, Prisons, Gibbers, to avenge the Transgressions of his Followers?

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Queſt. Thoſe Converts, indeed, are ſo many plain proofs of the overthrow of

Idols, since the first step in Christianity is the renouncing of the Devil, and of all Idol gods. But how doth it appear that he put an end to their Oracles, and other Divinations, which were the strongest argument of their Divinity among their Worshippers?

Ans. As his Birth drew near, they all grew dumb: God stopping all their false mouths against that time, that his own Eternal Word might be heard alone. The famed *Apollo* was then so sparing of his Responses, that * *Cicero* thought his renowned Oracle at *Delphos* had ceased in his days. And though afterwards he did speak sometimes, as I shall note in several instances: yet by the Power and Spirit of our Lord, when his Religion had got footing in the World, his Mouth was wholly stopped, and *locked up with the Keys of never-Divining silence*, as he himself says in a *Farewel Answer* recorded by his Champion † *Porphyrius*. And so were also the Mouths of *Jupiter Ammon*, and of all other impure Spirits most famed for Oracles in other places. This their devout Worshippers with grief beheld, and admired: and *Plutarch*, a learned Heathen, who lived within an hundred Years after *Christ*, writ a * *Book* about it still extant, wherein he inquires the best he can into the causes of it.

* *De Divinat. l. 2.*

† *Vid. Euseb. Præp. Evang. l. 5. c. 16.*

* Περὶ τῶν ἐκλελοιπότων χρηστηρίων.

Quest. I see their general silence is beyond question. But can you show that *Jesus* silenced them?

Ans.

Anſ. Their own profeſſed *Advocates* make him the cauſe of the Demons withdrawing themſelves from Men, both in this and in other effects of their preſence with them. For *ſince Jeſus began to be worſhipped*, ſays * *Porphyry, the Gods are no longer converſant with Men, nor has any Man received any publick benefit by them.* Nay, the vanquiſhed Spirits themſelves, who gave ſo many Teſtimonies to him, when he drove them from before his perſonal Preſence here on Earth, in their Oracles, and other Divinations, confeſſed ſo. For when *Auguſtus*, in whoſe time our Saviour was born, inquired of *Apollo* who ſhould ſucceed him in the *Empire*, his Reply was, as † *Suidas* reports, *That an* Hebrew *Boy, who rules the bleſſed Gods, had commanded him to pack away to Hell, and leave that place*, ſo that he was like to give them no more anſwers. Again, in the days of *Diocletian*, as * *Conſtantine* relates in *his Edict to the Provincials of the Eaſt*, he gave out another *Oracle*, Declaring *he could give no true Anſwers, becauſe of the juſt Perſons upon the Earth.* And when *Diocletian* asked, *Who were thoſe juſt Perſons:* the *Prieſt* anſwered, *They were the Chriſtians.* Which *Conſtantine declares*, and *calls God to witneſs*, was *ſaid in his hearing*, who, being a *very Youth*, attended the Emperour at that time. Afterwards, in the Reign of *Julian* †, when his *Temple at Daphne*, celebrated for Oracles,

* *Vid. Euſeb. Præp. Evang. l. 5. c. 1. & Theodor. de curand. Græc. Affect. l. 10.*

† Under Αυγῦς & Καῖσαρ.

* *Euſeb. de vit. Conſtant. l. 2. c. 50, 51.*

† *Sozom. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 5. c. 19. & Theod. Hiſt. Eccl. l. 3. c. 10. & Chryſ. Homil. de S. Bab.*

was

was confronted by a *Christian Church*, wherein were laid the Bones of the *Martyr Babylas*, he presently *grew speechless.* And when *Julian* pressed him for an Answer, by *magnificent Gifts and Sacrifices*, at last he told him, *He was hindred from giving Oracles by the dead Bodies in that place.* Which the Emperour well understanding, *singled out the Coffin of Babylas*, without disturbing the other dead, whereof many lay there interr'd, and ordered the Christians to remove it. Indeed, when the *Heathens* at any time *consulted their Gods by Sacrifice*, and were to read their Answer painted upon the *entrails*, if any of their *Christian Servants* happened to stand by, *the wicked Spirits fled away without giving the accustomed signs, and their deserted Prophets could make no Predictions.* Which being complained of to their wicked and superstitious Princes, was several times the chief cause, as * *Lactantius* notes, which enraged them to *persecute the Christians.* In particular, it inflamed *Diocletian* to begin his Persecution, the Bloodiest of all others. For his *madness* against them, as the † same *Author* reports, was because *their presence, and profession of Faith in Jesus, stopped the mouth of his Gods, and troubled all his Sacrifices.* So that whilst any of them was there, though he offered often, one time after another, this superstitious Man, an insatiable inquirer into Futurities, *could receive no answer.* Nay, to shew further the Power, which, as I say, not only *Christ* himself, but

* *Instit. l.4. c. 27.*

† *De Mort. Persec. c. 10.*

but every *common Chriſtian* had, to command and controul theſe unclean *Demons*, * *Tertullian* deſires the Emperours to make the Experiment, and bring any that is *vexed by a Demon*, or any *Prophet that is thought inſpired by him*, before the *Judgment-ſeat*: and there ſet any *poor Chriſtian*, to *command that Demon to ſpeak who he is. And if*, ſaith he, *not daring to lye to him, he doth not as truly there before you all confeſs himſelf a Devil, as he had falſly otherwhere proclaimed himſelf a God, then let that malapert Chriſtian be put to death, for undertaking what he is not able to make good.* And the ſame is alledged by † *Minutius Felix* in his *Book* againſt the *Heathens*.

* *Apol. c.* 23.

† *De Idol. Van. p.* 30.

Queſt. This extirpation of *Pagan* Idolatry, being an effect ſo illuſtriouſly great, and that would be ſo vehemently oppoſed, and wherein ſo many People and Nations were concerned, it muſt needs be the obſervation, and aſtoniſhment of all the World, and all Men muſt evidently ſee when it is brought about?

Anſ. Yes, and ſo it happened. After our Saviour's Death, it was the great buſineſs, that took up Mens thoughts and diſcourſe, that exerciſed the Pens of the beſt Wits, and the Skill of Politicians, that unſheathed the Magiſtrates Sword againſt the Godlieſt of his Subjects, and expoſed the bleſſed *Martyrs* on Theatres, to wild Beaſts, and all ſorts of Torments and Deaths, in all the *Roman* Empire, and other places, for ſeveral

several Ages. This Triumph of *Messiah* over *Satan*, that grand Enemy and Usurper, made a greater, and more universal and lasting noise, and astonishment, than ever was made at the downfal of the vastest, and most potent Empire.

Quest. But besides this evidence, as it accomplished a Prediction; was not such wonderful prevalence of *Christ*'s Religion, over all the Legal Establishments and Idolatrous Religions of the World, a clear testimony of God to him, as it was a most miraculous, and plainly Divine thing?

Ans. Yes, indisputably it was. When Religions prevail, that have been in possession for several Ages; that shows the power of Custom, and Education. When such, as are inforced by Laws and Arms, and which the Secular Power doth espouse, and propagate; that shows the might of Authority, and forcible Violence. When such, as are agreeable to Mens Lusts, and gratifie their natural inclinations, that manifests how easily Men are persuaded to what they like, and the mighty influence of natural Propensions. When such, as come fortified with a general Vogue, and numerous Assertors; that shows the overawing influence of Crouds, and Multitudes. But when a Religion is made up of self-denials, and runs in many things cross to Mens common sentiments, and in more to their inclinations, and foretels sufferings

to

to its followers, and inrages evil Men, and evil Spirits. When it decries the assumed Divine Honours of Emperours, and stints and controuls all their unjust, and impious commands. When it lessens the credit of all *Gentile* Priests, who at that time had the guidance of Mens Consciences, reproving their most extol'd Opinions, as false, or frivolous; and their most beloved Practices, as wicked, or superstitious. When it enters against all authority of Laws, and craft of Politicians, and subtilty of Philosophers, and power of Magistrates, and violence of Tumults, and Prejudices and Lusts of all, and seeks to pull up all the firmest establishments of former Ages, altering not only the publick Constitution, but, what usually men are more fond of, the approved Religion of Kingdoms, under which God had made their Ancestors most flourishing and victorious, as was plain in the case of the *Romans*. When it attempts all this by a few, and those too unlearned, and unfriended, mean, and despicable Persons. And when they seek to atchieve it, not by fraud, or indirect arts, or quaint speeches, or sly allurements, but by meekly telling a plain story concerning *Jesus*, and hoping to prevail and conquer all, not by Fighting, but Suffering for him. When a Religion, I say, that teaches such hard and unwelcome Lessons, and is managed by such Instruments, and meets with such oppositions, and has nothing humane great, or promising

miſing about it, but all things great, and, to reaſon, inſuperable againſt it, doth yet after all overſpread the World, at the ſame time all viſible Powers ſeem thus combined to drive it out of it: 'tis plain it is helped on by an *inviſible* Hand, and that God interpoſes to make it victorious. And I need not ſhow, how this was the caſe of Chriſtianity, in all theſe particulars.

Queſt. Thoſe Prophecies, which prefixt the exact time of *Meſſiah*'s coming, did plainly prove *Jeſus* to be the Man, becauſe none ſtarted up at the time appointed, to make any competition. But if there had, theſe other ſigns, which you have given from them, are ſo great, ſo peculiar, and, ſo obvious, I will not ſay, to be obſerved, but ſo hard, and almoſt impoſſible, when brought to paſs, to be overlooked, as muſt needs to the ſatisfaction of all reaſonable inquirers, demonſtrate him to be the Perſon againſt all pretenders.

Anſ. Moſt certainly they would, to all that knew his Story, what he was, and did, and would take the pains to compare it with theſe diſtinguiſhing marks, which the Holy Prophets ſeveral hundred Years before had given of him. For had any *falſe Chriſt* appeared exactly in *the fulneſs of time*, (as through the care of God's watchful Providence, no one then made any pretence beſides him) yet had it been eaſie to ſhow ſuch deceiver was not the *Chriſt* whom the Prophets foretold, becauſe he was not born

born of a pure Maid, whereto no Man but our Saviour ever pretended. Or because, if he did at some times shew some feats of Magick, as the Enchanters whom *Josephus* mentions, yet he was not withal eminent for Piety, or had not the Spirit resting upon him, to do Cures on all occasions, and of all sorts, or to cast out Devils of whatever kind, and numbers, which no Man but *Jesus* ever enjoyed. Or because, though he might die for his Imposture, as he justly deserved, yet his Death was not in that way they had described, nor with those many notable circumstances they had prefixed for it. Nor would any such *false Christs* rise again from the Dead, as God plainly promised *Messiah* should, and our *Jesus* did. Nor were they any of them the Authors of a new Covenant, which supplied what the Covenant from *Mount Sinai* wanted. Neither did they erect a Kingdom, taking in the *Gentiles*, as well as the *Jewish* Nation: nor had Kings and Queens to come and worship, and pay homage to them. Nor did they convert the *Gentile* World from the worship of Idols, and drive the Devils out of all their Temples, as he did most gloriously by his appearance.

Quest. But after all these instances, of a punctual, and exact accomplishment of the ancient Prophecies in *Jesus*, doth not *Isaiah* foretel, that in *Messiah's days*, *the Wolf shall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard*

pard with the Kid, that the sucking Child shall play safely *on the hole of the Asp*, and *they shall not hurt, nor destroy in all Gods holy mountain*, Isaiah 11. 6, 7, 8, 9. That then Men *shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more*, Isaiah 2. 4. By these, and such like Prophecies, *Messiah* was to bring in a marvellous Probity, and universal Peace into the World. And amidst all the injuries, the bitter Contentions, and bloody Wars among Christians, how is this accomplished?

Ans. These Prophecies speak not this of all Persons in his days, but only of all that will be his true followers, and govern themselves according to Prince *Messiah*'s Laws, and Practice. For that, which shall prevent all *doing hurt among them*, says *Isaiah*, is *the full knowledge of the Lord*, which restrains only such, as will practise what they understand, *Isaiah* 11. 9. And they, who *shall beat their swords into plow shares*, says he again, are *the many people*, whom *Messiah shall rebuke*, which, according to the usual Phrase of Scripture, may imply their amending upon his rebuking them, *Isaiah* 2. 4. They were the sincerely devout, and honestly obedient, who say to one another, *Let us go up to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in them*, verse 3. But as for the inviolable maintenance of this Probity and Peace,

Peace, by those, who are only his nominal Servants, or by the universality of Men in his days, that doth not follow from these places; nor doth it well comport with the present state of human Nature, which is mixt with many angry, and incroaching Passions; nor suit with other Prophecies before-mentioned, that speak of much wickedness after *Messiah*'s coming, and of many still retaining their old genius, which Predictions must all be accomplished, as well as these.

Quest. But if this Peace, and Probity are to be so limited, and conditionate in the event, how come they to be expressed so generally, and absolutely in the Prediction? Is it not odd to speak of an effect as universal under *Messiah*, which shall not appear universally in all under him, but only in those that will hearken to him?

Ans. No; for in an effect, wherein both he, and they are joyntly concerned, his saying all shall do it, implies they shall so far, as concerns his part, and that he would do all, which behoves him towards it. And this *Jesus* has done, giving a Law as apt to engender, and preserve Peace, as any Law can be, and taking away all separating and dividing rites introduced by *Moses*, which were apt to make difference between *Jews* and *Gentiles*. And to say *all Men shall do a thing*, when God has done his part to make all do it, though, through their obstinate wickedness, many of them

will not do it in the event, is a form of Speech usual in Holy *Scripture*. Thus it is particularly in *Ezekiel*, when God foretels the *taking away all detestable Idols*; and yet in the same place speaks of several, who would still *retain* them, and thereby incur his heavy indignation, *Ezekiel* 11. 18, 21. And in *Jeremy*, when God foretels *his peoples living again in their own land after the captivity*, most *piously*, and *peaceably*, Jer. 32. 37, &c. although, through their stubborn wickedness, which nothing would amend, things fell out contrary.

Quest. But though these Prophecies do not imply, that every Man shall live so when *Messiah* comes, yet however they seem to note that many will, who would not otherwise; and that Godliness, Peace, and Justice, shall mightily increase in the World by his appearance. And has this been fulfilled by *Jesus*?

Ans. Yes, it was eminently verified in the first times. For then the Christians were remarkably, as the most virtuous livers, and honest dealers, so most kind, and friendly among themselves; *See*, * said the *Gentiles*, *how the Christians love one another*. They were absolutely the best Neighbours, being so far from offering any injuries, that they durst not requite them, but with Prayers and Kindnesses. They were indisputably the most tame, and peaceable Subjects, overcoming all the outragious violence, and oppressions of their Persecutors,

* *Tertull. Apol. c.* 39.

cutors, not by fighting their way through them, but by *Faith* and *Patience* under them. And like effects, his Religion has produced in all other times, upon all those, who were true followers both of him and them, and were Christians in very deed, not only in name and profession. It has improved all peaceable tempers, and sweetned many sowre, and smoothed many rough ones, and brought Men of the most different Complexions, Estates, Interests, and Abilities, to live fairly and sociably together. Indeed, all Men are not thereby made godly, just, and tame, as we must not expect they ever will be in this World; for Men will be Men, and shew human passions, and errors, under any institution. But yet the common estate of the World is much amended, and things generally much more fairly, and equitably managed, and the true God more duly and devoutly worshipped, and all Virtue and Piety in greater repute, and Injustice much curbed, and both private, and publick Quarrels, much more frequently prevented, and more fairly and speedily composed since *Christ*'s coming amongst us, than they were before. So that although the improvement of these Virtues among us, is little in respect of our aids, and opportunities; yet is it great in comparison with the former face of the World, and may pass for a New, Righteous, and reformed State, in respect of what it was in days of *Heathen* ignorance. And

this is as much accompliſhment, as 'tis reaſonable to require in ſuch Prophecies; which being made of men, who have frail and corrupt Natures, and converſe in the midſt of temptations, ought not to be ſtrained beyond what is conſiſtent with the condition of this World, and with human Nature, and Circumſtances. But if the above-cited Prophecies did really ſpeak of a more univerſal effect, than has been hitherto accompliſhed: there is time enough ſtill behind, ere *Chriſt* reſign up the Kingdom to the Father, wherein to make it good. For of the things predicted to fall out under *Meſſiah*, ſome came to paſs at firſt, and others, in the long flux of time ever ſince, have ſtill been ſucceſſively fulfilled; but many are ſtill behind, and to have no accompliſhment, till near the day of Judgment.

Queſt. You have fully ſhewed, how *Jeſus* appears to be the *Chriſt* from *ancient Prophecies*, whereby I plainly perceive how deſerved[illegible] in the *Revelations*, the *Spirit of Prophecy* is called the *teſtimony of Jeſus*, Rev. 19. 10. But do the *Jews*, to whom theſe Prophets all ſpake, and who not only had the keeping, but were alſo moſt diligent and careful in examining theſe *Oracles*, underſtand theſe places as Predictions of *Meſſiah*, which appear to have had ſuch clear, and undeniable accompliſhment in our *Jeſus*?

Anſ.

Anſ. The old *Jews*, who lived before *Chriſt*, generally did, as is plain from *Rabbi Nehumias*, and others, and from their general expectation of him about the time preſcribed, according to thoſe Prophecies. And ſo did numbers of their earlieſt, and moſt renowned Doctors ſince, as learned Men have ſhown abundantly from their Writings. But many of the later *Rabbins*, not daring to denie the ſuitableneſs of the events in *Jeſus*, have choſe rather to wreſt thoſe places, againſt their plain meaning, and the opinions of their Anceſtors, to other purpoſes, and deny them as ſpoken of *Meſſiah*. And what ſhould make this difference, and cauſe later Men to go off from ancient times, even from thoſe, who lived near to ſome of the Prophets themſelves, who, if they gave any hints, and interpretations of what they delivered in their own days, were moſt likely to gather up, and underſtand ſuch traditionary Explications? The reaſon of this difference is pretty obvious. For thoſe ancient *Jews*, living before *Chriſt*, looked only to the Prophecies themſelves, and the general ſenſe and expectation raiſed about them by the Prophets: But among the *Jews* ſince *Chriſt*, ſeveral look alſo at perſonal prejudices, and had rather deny any thing, than own *Jeſus* to be *Meſſiah*, which they cannot well avoid doing, if thoſe places are ſpoken of him.

CHAP. III.

Proving Jeſus to be the Chriſt, from other Divine Teſtimonies.

The Contents.

Jeſus proved to be the Chriſt, 2. *From the teſtimony of* John *the Baptiſt.* John *knew this by Revelation, and had it confirmed by a ſign. He was an acknowledged Prophet, and of moſt clear and currant fame. And gave this teſtimony, before he was perſonally acquainted with Jeſus.* 3. *From the teſtimony of Jeſus himſelf ſeveral conſiderations ſhewing the validity of this teſtimony, though it were in his own caſe. This not impugned by Chriſt's words,* John 5. 31. *nor gives any colour or advantage to Fanatical Enthuſiaſts.* 4. *From his Miracles. Theſe no lying wonders, as may appear, becauſe ſhewn in ſeveral inſtances not imitable by Demons. As,* 1. *Foretelling future Contingencies. An account of Demon-Predictions among the* Gentiles. 2. *Diſcerning Hearts, and Thoughts.* 3. *Raiſing the Dead.* 4. *Caſting out Devils, of moſt ſtubborn ranks, and in greateſt numbers and combinations. It may alſo appear from their intent and deſign; and from*

from their numbers, and the manner of working them. No oppoſing the Miracles of Moſes *againſt Chriſt's Miracles becauſe they were wrought to ſet aſide the Law of* Moſes. *That Law was given with a deſign to be altered. An account how for all that, ſeveral of its Precepts are juſtly called Statutes for ever.* 5. *From the teſtimony of the Father, who declared Jeſus to be the Chriſt by audible voices. And by raiſing him from the dead, and ſhewing him in full poſſeſſion of his pretences.*

Queſtion. BUT beſides this proof of *Jeſus* being the *Chriſt*, from *ancient Prophecies*, you ſaid the ſame would be evidently made out, by *ſeveral Divine Teſtimonies other ways.* Pray what are thoſe Teſtimonies?

Anſ. The Teſtimony of *John the Baptiſt*, who was ſent into the World to give Witneſs to it; the Teſtimony of *Jeſus himſelf*, which very well deſerves to be truſted; the Teſtimony of his *miraculous works*, which are an evidence drawn up by the Finger of God; and, to name no more, the Teſtimony of *God the Father*, who himſelf became a Voucher of it. So that he muſt give the lye, both to Heaven, and Earth, to God, and Men, who ſhall disbelieve, or gainſay it.

Anſ. Did *John the Baptiſt* teſtifie *Jeſus* to be *the Chriſt?*

Anſ. Yes, and that upon a moſt publick occaſion, when the *great Council of the Nation*, the *Sanhedrim*, *ſent Prieſts and Levites* to him on purpoſe, to know whether he himſelf *were the Chriſt*, John 1. 19. For then his anſwer was, That *he was not the Chriſt*, verſe 20. but that the *Chriſt* was *come*, and was then *among them*, verſe 26, 27. Yea, *the next day ſeeing Jeſus coming to him*, he points at him, and declares to them all, that he is the Perſon. *Behold*, ſaith he, *the Lamb of God, which takes away the ſins of the world. This is he, of whom I ſaid, after me comes a man, which is preferred before me*, verſe 29, 30. which Teſtimony he repeats again *the next day*, upon another occaſion, *verſe* 35, 36. And this Teſtimony *Jeſus* alledged for himſelf when he reaſoned with the *Jews*, in vindication of his own Authority. *Ye ſent unto John*, viz. in the meſſage from *Jeruſalem*, *and he bare witneſs unto the truth*, John 5. 33.

Queſt. But how came *John* to know it, and why in this caſe muſt we take his word?

Anſ. Becauſe he was a *Prophet*, *all the Jews*, as the Scriptures teſtifie, *held John for a Prophet*, Matth. 21. 26. Nay, as *Chriſt* ſays, he was one of the greateſt of Prophets, for *of all that are born of women, there hath not riſen a greater, than John the Baptiſt*, Matth. 11. 9, 11. And he declares, that *the Spirit revealed this to him:* nay, that, for his greater confirmation, it gave him a viſible

ſible and moſt illuſtrious ſign; *ſaying unto him, Upon whom thou ſhalt ſee the Spirit deſcend, and remain on him, that ſame is he.* And *this Spirit, John* declares he *did ſee deſcend* in a *bodily ſhape* upon *Jeſus* at his *Baptiſm*, and at the ſame time, as S. *Matthew* * adds, *heard a voice from God*, calling him *his beloved Son* for his fuller conviction, *John* 1. 32, 33. Yea, ſince, as the *Nazarene* Goſpel relates it, upon this deſcent, preſently there *ſhone a great light about the place*; and *a fire was lighted in Jordan* wherein *John* Baptized him, as † *Juſtin* the *Martyr* teſtifies: what would ſtill be a more aſſuring proof to *John* in this caſe, this *bodily deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt*, was in a body of Light and dazling Splendor, the uſual Glory wherein God himſelf was wont to appear, which hovering over our Saviour, as a Dove doth when it lights, and darting forth its bright Beams round about him, did plainly repreſent what the *Jews* call the *Schechinah*, and proclaim him to be a Divine Perſon. Thus did *John* know *Jeſus* to be the *Meſſiah*, by an evidence infallible, and every way convincing. And this he teſtifies of him, not as a thing by the bye, but ſays it was the very Errand whereon he was ſent, and for declaration whereof he was called out by God to be a *Prophet*. *That he ſhould be made manifeſt to Iſrael*, ſays he, *therefore am I come*, John 1. 31.

* Matth. 3, 16, 17.

† *Dial. cum Tryph.*

Queſt.

Quest. Indeed, if *John* had such Revelations of this matter, as he declares, 'tis plain he was not deceiv'd about it himself, but spoke out of sober knowledge, and certain grounds. So that if there is no cause to question his honesty, there is no getting off from his Testimony. But what can you say to shew him a true and honest Man, who would not feign things to deceive others?

Ans. His Sanctity, and Integrity, were the honour, and admiration of his own times. He led a most mortified, rigid Life, neither caring how hard his Fare was, nor how coarse his Habit. He *neither eat Bread, nor drank Wine*, whence in *Scripture* he is said to *come, neither eating, nor drinking*, i. e. not living upon the usual Diet of other Men, *Matth.* 11. 18. compared with *Luke* 7. 33. *His meat was locusts, and wild hony; and* all *his rayment of camels hair, girt about him with a leathern girdle*, Matth. 3. 4. And thus voluntarily abandoning, I will not say the pleasures, but even the ease, and common conveniences of the Flesh, he was not capable to be tempted by them. He was eminently above all affectation of Power, or Praise; insomuch, that when all were ready to receive him for *Messiah*, he told them he * *was not worthy to unty his shoos*, and was glad when he could fix that Honour on *Jesus*, whose right it was, declaring openly, *he must increase, but I must decrease*, John. 3. 29, 30, 31. He was illustrious for Piety,

* John 1. 27.

Piety, and moſt bold and zealous in reproving Vice, as he fully manifeſted by his undaunted freedom, in cenſuring the ſins of all *ſtates*, and *ſorts* of People, as *they came to him* for *Baptiſm*, Matth. 3. And as for his ſincerity and plain-dealing, till *Jeſus* came, they could not in all that Age ſhow ſuch a down-right, honeſt Man. When *Herod* ſet his heart upon him, and loved to hear him, his growing great at *Court* did not make him ſwerve in the leaſt from his Country ſimplicity, or teach him how to flatter, nor would he there ſo much as connive at his *Prince's ſin*, though he was to loſe, not only his Favour, but his own Hearts Blood, for his plain freedom in taxing and *reproving* it, *Matth.* 14. 3, 4. 10.

Queſt. Theſe are ſignal proofs of an upright, honeſt Man. But did the *Jews*, who lived in thoſe days, ſee all this in him?

Anſ. Yes, and honour and admire it too. *He was*, as *Chriſt* ſays, *a burning and a ſhining light* among them, *and for a while*, till he had diſguſted them by teſtifying ſo fully for *Jeſus*, they *were willing to rejoyce in him*, John 5. 35. *They all held him for a Prophet*, and ſo if they would be true to themſelves, ought ſurely to rely upon his word, *Matth.* 21. 26. They thought it not enough to Admire and Praiſe, but thronged in to become his *Diſciples*, and *Followers*: and thoſe that did ſo, were not only the ignorant vulgar, but the moſt learned and beſt reputed *Sects*, the *Phariſees and Sadducees*, who

came,

came, desiring to receive *Baptism* at his hands, *Matth.* 3. 7. Nay, they did not only repute him for a *Prophet*, but fancied him the greatest of all Prophets, the *Christ*, whom all desired, and expected. And this was not barely the surmize of some private Men, but the opinion of the *Sanhedrim*, that Great Council and Representative of the *Jewish* Nation. For they sent Deputies to him, a select number of *Priests, and Levites from Jerusalem, to ask him* this Question, *John* 1. 19. Thus great, and currant was *John*'s Fame in the *Jewish* Nation, as is declared also by † *Josephus* a *Jewish* Historian; which, when they begun to value him less, out of their hatred to *Jesus* to whom he bore witness, was yet of such awful Authority and Account, that they, who would not receive durst not openly gainsay it; as the *Pharisees* durst not, who, when *Jesus* pressed them with *John*'s Testimony for his Authority, pitifully sneaked, and openly refused to give any Answer to it, *Matth.* 21. 27.

† *Antiq. l.* 18. *c.* 7.

Quest. But was not *Jesus John*'s Friend? And though he was too mortified to be tempted, and too honest to be gained by any thing else; yet might not affection blind his Eyes, and he fancy more, and speak things greater, than were true of *Jesus*, out of Friendship?

Ans. No, if he had been an old Friend, the grounds *John* gives are so clear and full, as could not in any reason be questioned.

But,

But, what is ſtill a further circumſtance in this Teſtimony, he is careful to tell us, that he declared this of *Jeſus*, before they were acquainted. For when he gives his Teſtimony to him, after he had ſeen the *Holy Ghoſt* deſcend upon him at his *Baptiſm*, *I knew him not*, ſays he, *but he that ſent me to baptize with water, the ſame ſaid unto me, Upon whom thou ſhalt ſee the Spirit deſcending, and remaining on him, that ſame is he that baptizeth with the Holy Ghoſt. And* this *I ſaw* by him, *and bare record*, John 1. 33, 34. 'Tis true, when he came to him for *Baptiſm*, which was before he had ſeen this ſign, or made this declaration, S. *Matthew* ſays, *John knew him*, and thereupon would have put him by, as *having more need to be baptized of him*, Matth. 3. 14. But that was purely by *Revelation*, the ſame Spirit then ſuggeſting the preſence of *Meſſiah* to *John*, that *made him leap for joy in the womb*, at the *ſalutation of the bleſſed Virgin*, after She had conceived him *Luc.* 1. 44. But till he gave this Teſtimony to him, he knew him not as a Friend or Acquaintance, nor had any former Converſation, or correſpondence paſſed between them.

Queſt. No wonder this Teſtimony ſhould over-awe the *Jews*, when *Jeſus* urged it for himſelf, though it could not convince them.

But beſides this Teſtimony of *John* the *Baptiſt*, you mentioned alſo the Teſtimony of *Jeſus himſelf*, as deſerving credit. Pray clear up that.

Anſ.

Anſ. This alſo *Jeſus* alledges for himſelf, and ſtands upon it. *I am one that bear witneſs of my ſelf, and my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go*, John 8. 14, 18.

Queſt. But this is only his own word, in his own caſe. And Men are too apt to ſay great, and undue things of themſelves, out of a deſire of Honour, or Advantage. And if we believe all on their own ſayings, we muſt believe all deceivers: for the rankeſt Impoſtors are true Men, if we dare truſt themſelves.

Anſ. True, indeed, it were as unreaſonable to believe all, as to believe none. But in theſe caſes, we are to put a difference between Witneſſes, and not to truſt the accounts given of themſelves by all, but only by credible Perſons. In particular, if it appears of any Man, that he is not fanciful, falſe, or deſigning; we ſhould be very inclinable to believe his account: eſpecially, if God had ſet ſome extraordinary atteſting marks upon him, or ſhewed ſome Miracles about him, or if he himſelf, which was the † *Legal* Teſt of Prophets, ſhould give ſome extraordinary ſign to gain credit. All which moſt eminently concur in this Teſtimony, which *Jeſus* gave of himſelf, for *his being the Chriſt.*

† Deut. 18. 22.

Queſt. Doth it appear that *Jeſus* was no fanciful Man, apt to take up Opinions on ſlight grounds, or preſume things, eſpecially in favour of himſelf, without reaſon?

Anſ.

Anſ. Yes, for in all his carriage, as he appeared moſt humble, and ſelf-denying; ſo did he clearly manifeſt, not only a moſt quick and penetrating, but alſo a moſt ſober, and conſiderate Wiſdom. In all his life, he was never ſeen to be precipitate in any Counſels, nor preſumptuous in any Conceits, nor miſtaken in any Opinions and Reſolutions, but could ſolve clearly all Queſtions, and ſhew the true weight, and juſt validity of all Arguments. Even they, who would not receive his Wiſdom, could not but admire it, and the very *Officers* ſent to apprehend him, returned *ſaying, Never man ſpake like this man*, John 7. 46. Beſides, the things whereon * he builds his own Credit, are not any conjectural Speculations, or diſputable Opinions, but plain matters of Fact: ſuch as his † *living*, and *converſing with God in Heaven*, long *before he came into the world*; his * *coming out from him*, and *ſpeaking what he* † *ſaw*, and heard *him* declare, whilſt he lay from Eternal Ages in his Boſom. And theſe, if they are untruths, cannot be fancies, but downright Forgeries, and Impoſtures: they argue not ſo much an Enthuſiaſtical, as a falſe and deſigning Man, ſince no Perſon in his wits, as 'tis moſt evident he was, could fancy himſelf into ſuch perſuaſions. And thus, it ſeems, the Adverſaries of *Jeſus* themſelves believed. For they never once accuſed him, as being a deluded Enthuſiaſt, but always as a falſe Impoſtor, who

* John 8. 14.

† John 17. 5.

* John 16. 28. & 8. 42.

† John 8. 38.

who craftily invented those pretensions, which he sought to impose upon the world, *Matth.* 27. 63. & *John* 7. 12.

Quest. Was he also as apparently honest, and undesigning?

Ans. Yes, for never Man sought so little for himself, or did so much for others, making it his *meat and drink* to bring Glory unto God, and dispense Blessings to the World. Whatsoever he claimed, or did, was in pursuit of those publick ends; not at all to greaten his own secular State and Power, or to gratifie his own Will and Humour. And on this score he calls upon all Men to believe him, as one that visibly could have no temptation to deceive, and plainly sought to serve no ends of his own upon them. *My judgment is just*, saith he, *because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father, which hath sent me*, John 5. 30.

Quest. Two great things there are, which Men may seek by such pretences: *Interest*, that ratifies the covetous; and *Honour*, that Idol of the ambitious, and vain-glorious. And doth it plainly appear of *Jesus*, that in pursuing his pretensions, he sought neither of these?

Ans. Yes, For as for *Honour*, though by his miraculous Power, he did every where the most stupendious things: yet was he never tempted to do any one-out of vanity, to set on his own Praise; but only as occasion was given him by the requests, or needs of

of Men; or as he saw they might serve to accomplish God's ends. Yea, after the miraculous Cures were done, he several times imposed *silence* on * those he cured, or those who were privy to it; to stifle the spreading of his own Fame. He gave the Honour of all he did to God, declaring, That † *of himself he could do nothing*, but that *his* * *finger* wrought all the works they so much admired, and directing them to *adore*, and *laud* him for them, as according ly they † did. And then, as for *worldly interest*, though he pretended to come as a *Prince* and *Shepherd*, yet he declared that was not to serve himself of his People, but to serve them; and shed his *Hearts Blood for them.* And all Men must needs say he seeks no private interest, or self design who comes among Men, only to have the opportunity to die for them. And being thus apparently free from all designs, or endeavours, of seeking his own interest, or applause; upon this score he calls upon all reasonable Men to receive his Testimony. *The good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep: I am the good Shepherd*, for *I lay down my life for them*, John 10. 11, 15. *I honour my father*, says he again, *and seek not mine own glory. He that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him*, John 8. 49, 50. & 7. 18.

* Matth. 8. 4 & 9. 30. & 12. 16.

† John 5. 30. & 14. 10.

* Luke 11. 20.

† Matth. 9. 8 & 15. 31. Luke 7. 16. & 18. 43.

Queſt. Indeed, ſuch manifeſtations of ſober Wiſdom, and undeſigning Integrity, are enough to gain great regard to any Man's account. But, as you ſaid, it would be of more force ſtill, if God, by extraordinary Providences, and miraculous Events, brought to paſs for, or about a Perſon, ſhould prepoſſeſs the World with a great Opinion, and raiſe in all Men ſome extraordinary expectations from him. And was this done for *Jeſus*, when he came?

Anſ. Yes, for, beſides that a *confeſſed Prophet* was ſent in God's Name, as I ſhewed, on purpoſe to declare him; a Train of *Revelations*, and *Miracles*, was laid by Almighty God, to prepare his way, and uſher him in. *One* Angel is ſent to his *Mother*, then and afterwards a Virgin, with the news of his Miraculous Conception; *another* to clear her Honour, and ſatisfie her jealous Husband; and a whole * *Hoſt* of them are heard to ſing *Anthems* of Joy and Praiſe at his Birth, declaring to the *Shepherds*, that he was *Chriſt the Lord*. A prodigious *Star*, of an irregular place and motion, is created to lead ſome great Men of the *Eaſt*, to the place where he was. Who, coming by its guidance to *Jeruſalem* in ſearch of him, put King *Herod*, and all the *Jews*, into an anxious fear and conſternation. And being led on farther by it, to *Bethlehem*, to the very Houſe where he lay, they moſt ſolemnly paid their Homage and Devotion, *offering him Gifts, Gold, Frankincenſe,*

* Luke 2.

Matth. 2.

kincense, and Myrrh. And to heighten the observation, and perpetuate the memory of these things, a strange instance of most lamentable, and unheard of cruelty accompanied them. For at the *Wise Mens* report, *Herod* growing jealous of this new King, and not being able to learn where he was, that, under pretence of going to Worship, he might seize and devour him, they failing to *bring him word* according to their promise, through *God's warning* them to the contrary *in a Dream:* in his Bloody Rage he *slew all the Children, under two years old, in Bethlehem, and all the coasts thereof,* assuredly concluding he should cut off him among them. Besides all which, at *the* * *accomplishment* of his Mothers *days of Purification,* when he was brought into the Temple, † *Simeon* (Son, as is supposed, to the Great *Hillel,* and Father to *Gamaliel*) and * *Hannah*, two Persons eminent for Piety and Holiness, and known, though not in ordinary course, yet at some times to be acted by a *Prophetick Spirit,* which, having ceased among the *Jews* for *four* hundred Years, ever since *Zechary* and *Malachy*, begun then to revive again, did own him for the *Christ of God,* and *spoke of him to all that looked for Redemption in Jerusalem.* All these, with a number of other great Signs shewed about him, were most publickly known among the *Jews,* and were the wonder, and discourse of that time, and must needs raise in Mens minds strange expectations

* Luke 2. 22.

† Ver. 25, 26, &c.

Ver. 36, 37, 38, &c.

from him. And ſeeing him thus viſibly ſent of God, they would be the more prepared, when he declared himſelf, to give him credit. Eſpecially, when they knew him ſtill more Glorioufly ſet out, and all the foregoing Signs advanced and confirmed, by the *viſible deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt* upon him, and the *voice from Heaven* accompanying it, at his *Baptiſm*, when he begun his *Preaching*.

Queſt. And to all this, did he alſo himſelf give them a *Sign* for his own juſtification?

Anſ. Yes, and the very ſame too, that *Moſes* preſcribed for a proof of any Man's being ſent of God as a Prophet, *viz. his fore telling things to come*, Deut. 18. 22. For this *Jeſus* did among them, and that too on this very ſcore, according to the rule of *Moſes* to juſtifie *his Miſſion*. His *own Reſurrection*, under the Type of *Jonas*, he gives to the *Jews* for a *ſign*, Matth. 12. 40. And *Judas*'s *Treaſon* he foretold to his Diſciples before it happened, *that* thereby, ſaith he, *when it is come to paſs, you may believe that I am he*. John 13. 19. And this alone is a ſufficient vindication of his Teſtimony, if he could produce nothing elſe. For in a Legal Trial at the Bar of *Moſes*, this would prove him a *true Prophet*. And that being once made out, his Teſtimony is no further to be queſtioned.

Queſt.

Quest. Indeed, such personal endowments, and so miraculous an entry, are enough to gain credit to any Person, and make the World believe what he says, though he wrought no Miracles for confirmation.

Ans. Very true, and so they did in *John*'s case. For *John*, as the *Scripture* says, *wrought no miracle*, John. 10. 41. But yet he was universally held for a Prophet, because of his eminent Integrity and Wisdom, and because his Conception was by a Mother barren and past Child-bearing, and was first revealed by the Message of an Angel, and his unbelieving Father struck dumb, and his Tongue as miraculously loosed again upon the Child's Birth to Prophesie concerning him; by all which he was notoriously known to be a *Child of Miracles*, though he *wrought none*. And all these, as I have noted, were far more eminent in *Jesus*, which therefore in all equity and reason should have gained him credit, and make him pass for a Prophet, as *John* did. Besides, that *Jesus* gave them Predictions, the Legal proof of true Prophets, which had been enough to authorize and justifie his Witness, had it come backed with no other credentials.

Quest. You have shewn reason enough, why *Jesus*'s report of himself should be trusted, since it came thus well fortified.

Anſ. Yes, this ſhows him a moſt creditable Witneſs, whilſt he appeared among us, to teſtifie for himſelf here *on Earth.* But beſides that, he has moreover ſhowed himſelf ſeveral times ſince he *went to Heaven*, particularly to *Stephen*, and *Saul*, giving them an ocular evidence, by appearing in actual Poſſeſſion of his Pretences. And this exhibition of himſelf, in Glorious Majeſty at God's own Throne, doth as convincingly ſpeak him to be *Chriſt the King*, as any Man's Perſonal appearance and preſentation of himſelf, can prove him to be a live Perſon. In doubt of a thing's exiſting in any condition, there is no ſuch ſatisfactory proof, as if the thing preſents it ſelf, and ſhews its ſtate by ocular demonſtration.

Queſt. But after all that you have ſaid, about the validity of this Teſtimony of *Jeſus* in his own caſe, doth not *Jeſus* himſelf ſay the contrary, when he tells the *Jews*, *If I bear witneſs of my ſelf, my witneſs is not true*, John 5. 31.

Anſ. By *not true*, he means not that 'tis no real Truth, nor that it is no proof of Truth; for in another place he ſays expreſly, *though I bear record of my ſelf, my witneſs is true*, John 8. 14. But only that it will not paſs in Law for a proof of Truth. And that, not for any defect in the kind, but only in the tale and number of Evidence. For *their Law*, as he notes, required *two Witneſſes*. So that although his own Teſtimony were one good proof, yet being

ing but one, it was of it self alone no full proof, but wanted the Testimony of *his Father* too to make it a Legal Evidence, *John* 8. 17, 18. And accordingly in the place objected, when he says his own is no good Testimony, in the next words he adds, *there is another that beareth witness of me*, which making up the Legal number if added to his own, would make an undeniable Testimony, *John* 5. 32.

Quest. But after all, will not this taking the word of *Jesus* in his own case, give colour and credit to designing Impostors, and *Fanatical Enthusiasts?*

Ans. It would, if he, or they were to be believ'd upon their bare sayings. But there is do danger at all of that, if, to back them, they must produce such Credentials, as I have set off in his case. For to be sure upon examination, they will appear, either not to be Persons of sober and solid reason, or not exempt from all just suspicion of vanity and self-design, or to want an extraordinary and miraculous introduction. Not to mention moreover, that they will have no acknowledged Prophet to bear Witness to them, and that they will fail of giving a Sign and Prediction, which, according to the strictest Test of *Moses*, was answered and made good by him. Which great differences, make their words in their own case, to be only either a forged, or a Fanatical bold Saying, which was sober Truth, and solid Evidence in him.

Queſt. Beſides theſe Teſtimonies, for *Jeſus being the Meſſiah*, you mentioned a *third*, viz. his *miraculous works*, which you called an *Evidence drawn up by the finger of God*. I pray you declare that.

Anſ. This *Jeſus* often urges for himſelf, and that too as of greater validity, than either *his own*, or *John*'s Teſtimony. *I have greater witneſs, than that of John; for the works, which the Father hath given me to finiſh, the ſame works that I do bear witneſs of me, that the Father hath ſent me*, John 5. 36. And *if I do the works of my Father, though you believe not me, believe the works*, John 10. 37, 38.

Queſt. Indeed, in pretence that any thing comes from God, Signs and Miracles are a convincing argument. For being a viſible effect, as our Saviour ſaid, of the *finger of God*, they ſhow evidently that God eſpouſes the Perſon who is impowered to work them, and will employ his Almighty Power to make his Sayings good. But one great difficulty lies in the way of this Evidence, and that is, that Miracles, or things ſeemingly as ſtrange as they, which we cannot diſtinguiſh from them, are oftimes wrought by *Satan* and *his Agents*. As they were by * *Jannes* and *Jambres*, the *Egyptian Magicians*, in their conteſt with *Moſes*: and by *falſe Chriſts*, and *falſe Prophets*, who, as our Saviour foretold, *ſhould ſhew ſigns and wonders*, Matth. 24. 24. and by the great *Antichriſt* and *Man of ſin*, whoſe coming,

* 2 Tim. 3. 8.

ing, S. *Paul* declares, ſhould *be after the working of Satan, with all power, and ſigns, and lying wonders*, 2 Theſſ. 2. 9. And if *Satan* works Miracles, or, which in effect is all one, what we ſhall take for ſuch, to credit falſe Impoſtors, as well as God doth to juſtifie true Prophets; how ſhall we diſtinguiſh theſe, and know of the Signs which *Jeſus* gave us, whether they are Divine Miracles, that evidence a true Man, or only Feats of Magick, which are ſhewn by many falſe Men?

Anſ. They are eaſily diſtinguiſhed, by the whole kind of ſome, and by the intent and deſign of all of them.

Queſt. I pray you inſtance to me in ſome, where they are diſtinguiſhed by the whole kind. That is, of ſome ſorts of Miracles done by *Jeſus*, which are peculiar to God, and which cannot be performed by any unclean Spirit.

Anſ. One is *foretelling future contingencies*, which *Jeſus* did ſeveral times. Particularly he foretold his *own* * *death*, and the ſtrange kind of it, by hanging after the *Roman* way *upon a* † *Croſs*; which was not only moſt accidental, but moſt improbable, ſince if he was taken off at all, it was not like to be by *Roman*, but *Jewiſh* malice. He foretold alſo that *Judas*, one of his own Diſciples, ſhould *betray him*, and that before he was given up to *Satan* to *enter into him*, or *Judas* himſelf, 'tis like, ever thought of any ſuch thing: nay, *he knew it*, ſays S. *John*, *from*

* Matth. 16. 21.
† Matth. 20. 19.

from the very *beginning*, John 6. 64, 70, 71. And that *Peter* ſhould *deny him*, yea, and that juſt *thrice*, *before the Cock crew twice*, Mark 14. 30. whereas, thoſe three occaſions of his denial, were then not only in themſelves moſt uncertain, but at the ſame time *Peter* made ſo ſure of his not denying him at all, that he confidently ſaid, he would *rather die with him*, than do it *in any wiſe*, Verſe 31. To theſe I might add, his Prediction of the Bloody * *perſecutions of his Diſciples*, the unhappy † *ſucceſs of falſe Prophets*, the *continuance* of his *Church and Religion*, though ever and anon groaning under moſt heavy Sufferings, to the * *worlds end*; with many others.

* Matth. 24. 9, 10. † Matth. 24. 11, 12.

* Matth. 28. 20. & 16. 18.

Queſt. Is this *Prediction of future Contingencies*, a work peculiar to the All-ſeeing God, and above the skill of all infernal Spirits?

Anſ. Yes, and thence 'tis called *Divination*, as manifeſting the *Divinity* of a Being. And accordingly herein God challenges all the pretended Gods of the *Heathens*; ſaying, *Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that you are Gods*, Iſaiah 41. 23. And this the Devils plainly manifeſt themſelves unable to do, by the *Ambiguity* of their *Oracles*, when they are conſulted in theſe caſes. For not knowing what will be the event of things, they uſe artifice in words, and frame Reſponſes of ſuch doubtful conſtruction, as are liable to be turned both ways, and

ſo

ſo equally capable of being verified by all events. Such was the noted Anſwer of the Devil at *Delphos*, cited by * *Cicero* from *Ennius*, which he is ſaid to have given to *Pyrrhus* King of *Epirus*, when he conſulted him about the iſſue of the War with the *Romans*:

* *De Divinat. l. 2.*

Aio te Æacida Romanos vincere poſſe.

Which, according to the different ways Men ſhould begin the conſtruction, was equally good *Latin*, and would be equally true, whether *he* ſhould conquer the *Romans*, or *they* ſhould conquer *him*. And ſuch alſo was that other Anſwer, which he cites from *Herodotus*, ſaid to be given to *Cræſus* King of *Lydia*, when he went againſt *Cyrus*:

Cræſus Halym penetrans magnam pervertet opum vim.

That is, if he paſſed the River *Halys* againſt *Cyrus*, he ſhould conſume a vaſt Wealth, and waſte a great Domination: which would be very true, whether it fell out to be theirs, or his own. Theſe ſtudiouſly uncertain, and ambiguous Anſwers, are a plain ſign the *Demon* was at a *non-plus*. Beſides, that future Contingencies are out of the reach, and foreſight of impure Spirits, is plain, becauſe thoſe cauſes are, whereon ſuch futurities depend. For

For they are wrapt up in the free-will of Men, which the Devils cannot force, but only tempt: and in the Counsel, and Providence of Almighty God, whose early determinations are hid from them, and are a secret locked up in his own Breast.

Quest. But have not *Demons* oft foretold such futurities, as when * *Spurinna* the *Augur*, by the Diabolical signs in the Sacrifice, could warn *Julius Cæsar* of his danger such a day, if he went into the *Senate-House*?

* *Suet. in Jul. c.* 81.

Ans. That the *Demon* might easily foretel, when the time, and place, and persons, and other circumstances of the Murder, had been resolved on among themselves, and he had been present, and principally influenced their Debates in all their Consults. Such Predictions are but like a seasonable discovery made by some of the Conspirators.

Quest. But what say you to Predictions of more remote things, as yet unconcerted among the immediate Actors, and to their foretelling the success of attempts, or expeditions, or other futurities of contingent nature, which the *Demons* often revealed to their Prophets, both by *Oracles*, *entrails of Sacrifices*, *feeding of Pullen*, and other ways in use among *Heathen Diviners*.

Ans. When they ventured at these, it was not with certainty and assurance, as infallible understandings; but only by guesses and conjectures, from the appearances

rances of things, their preparations, and probabilities, as politick observers, wherein they can go far, by reason of their great knowledge and experience. And when they were put to Answer on these points, if they were more distrustful of the issue, they gave ambiguous and uncertain Answers, capable of being verified by all events, which would be a sure reserve for their errors, as in the case of *Cræsus*, and *Pyrrhus*. But if the event seemed more likely, and they were presuming and bold enough to Answer plainly; then, since the effect would several times hit, as well as sometimes miss, they hoped all would be expounded in their favour, and their mistakes salved, by the Candor and Devotion of their Worshippers.

Quest. But do not you think *Demons* can speak of some such futurities in plain Speech, and there too with certainty and assurance?

Ans. Yes, some events are put into their hands, when any Persons are delivered to them, either for their *trial*, as *Job*, or for their *punishment*, as * *Ahab*. And after such delivery, they may foretel these events, as depending upon themselves. Thus might *Satan* easily have foretold the Invasions of the † *Chaldeans*, and *Sabeans*, upon *Job*'s *Oxen*, and *Camels*, after he had gained God's Licence: and *Judas*'s *Treason*, after he was delivered up to him, to * *enter into him*. And thus might they in the *Gentile Divinations*,

* 1 King. 22. 22.

† Job 1. 12, 15, 17.

* Luke 22. 3.

Divinations, foretel *cures of Diseases*, whereof by God's Commission they had been the Inflictors, *seeming then to cure, where they only ceased to kill*, as * *Tertullian* says. To predict such things, as are left to their Power and Ministry to accomplish, requires no more skill, than to know before-hand what they intend to do, and what are their own Decrees and Purposes. But 'tis beyond the fore-sight of any *Demons* to foretel such remote Contingencies, *before the abandoning of Persons*; as God doth frequently in the Holy Scriptures, declaring the most accidental things, which shall † *happen* to Men *yet* * *unborn*; or the most free and voluntary, which shall be * *done* by them. And as the Blessed *Jesus* did, and his *Apostles* after him by his Spirit, foretelling what should befal the whole Nation of the *Jews*, both young and old, after almost *forty* Years; and what should happen to his own Church, in remote Ages; and what should be, not only the temptations and trials, but the most contingent carriage and free actions of good Men, who were in God's Protection, and whom the impure Spirits could only tempt, not govern, as is plain among many others, in that of *Peter's thrice denying*, and the *Apostles forsaking* him.

* *Apol. c.* 22.

† Gen. 15. 13.

* Jer. 25. 12. & c. 29. 10.

* 1 King. 13. 2. & Isa. 44. 28.

Quest. But the famed Oracles of the *Sibyls*, from which * *Virgil* transcribed some Predictions, and which startled † *Cicero*, when the *Quindecemviri*, who had the custody

* *Eclog.* 4.

† *De Divin. l.* 2.

dy and expoſition of them, were bringing out thence the news of a King into the Senate, were ſpoke of *Chriſt*, and fully verified in him, who was no *abandoned* Perſon. And did not *Demons* here foreſee, and foretel ſuch futurities, as depend on God, and were wrapt up, as you ſaid, in his Counſel?

Anſ. No, for very probably the Spirit that revealed thoſe things to theſe *Heathen Sibyls*, was not any infernal Spirit, but the Spirit of the true God, which ſometimes inſpired *Heathens*, as it did * *Balaam* the *Aramite*, to Propheſy of ſeveral events, particularly of *Meſſiah*, thereby even among the *Gentile* World, to raiſe an expectation of him, who was to be the † *deſire of all Nations*. Or, if they had it not from the Spirit of God at the firſt hand, yet had they it thence at the ſecond, *viz.* by reading it in the *Jewiſh* Prophets, by whom God had before foretold theſe things: which is a thing not improbable, ſince they expreſs them ſometimes in their very Forms, and Allegories. The *Demons* revealed not theſe things to their Prophets, or, if they did, the Prediction was not their own, but, as * *Tertullian* ſays, *they ſtole their Divination.*

* Num. 24.

† Hag. 2. 7.

* *Apol. c.* 22.

Queſt. The powers of darkneſs then, can only gueſs at ſuch futurities, whoſe cauſes are at work, and whereof they ſee ſigns and appearances, like Politicians; or diſcover things ready to take effect, when they

they have been in the club of the Actors and Conspirators; or presignifie what they intend to do with such, as God has delivered into their hands; or repeat Predictions, from God's true *Prophets* in the Holy Scriptures: in some one, or other whereof, did their fore-sight consist in *Heathen* Divinations. But as for the voluntary actions of all under God's Protection, and all such remote and contingent futurities, as are not determinable by natural causes, but depend upon Mens free-will, and God's free Providence, they are above their reach, so that we are sure of the true God where we have such Predictions?

Ans. Yes, and therefore it is evident *Jesus* came from God, because he, as I said, and his *Apostles* after him by his Spirit, did foretel such as these, as I have shewn in several instances.

Quest. What other Miracles did *Jesus* work, which are peculiar to God, and above the power of a wicked Spirit?

Ans. Secondly, He *saw into Mens hearts and secret thoughts*: discovering, before any outward proofs and manifestations, the fickleness of *some Disciples*, John 2. 24. and the veil'd falshood of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, who stood as insidious Spies upon him, *Luke* 6. 8. and adapting his Answers, and Discourses, not only to Mens Questions, but also to their inward Thoughts and Surmizes, before they expressed and proposed them to him, as he did with *the Pharisees*,

Pharisees, Matth. 12. 25. and in several other places. And this is another work, which God claims as peculiar to himself; stiling himself the *searcher of hearts, and trier of reins*; yea, claiming the knowledge of them for this reason, which is peculiar to him, because he is to judge, and recompence them. *I the Lord search the heart, and try the reins, to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings*, Jer. 17. 10. And *thou, even thou only knowest the hearts of all the children of men*, saith *Solomon*, 1 King. 8. 39. * Luke 6. 8, 9. Matth. 9. 4.

Quest. Did *Jesus* any more Miracles, which are performable only by the *finger of God*, and are above the force of Magick?

Ans. Yes, *Thirdly*, He *raised the dead*, as † *Jairus's daughter*; and *the* * *widows son* of *Nain*, when he was *carried out to be buried*; and † *Lazarus*, after he *had been four days dead*. And this again is peculiarly God's work. For when once Souls are separated from their Bodies, they undergo God's Sentence, and are secured in such places as he allots, whence they cannot return, or be remanded, but by his Licence, and Power, that effects all things. *There is no God with me, for I kill, and I make alive*, saith God by *Moses*, Deut. 32. 39. All separate Souls are under Locks and Keys, and 'tis a Divine Hand, which holds *the keys of hell and of death*, Rev. 1. 18. † Mar. 5. 42. * Luke 7. 12, 13, 14, 15. † John 11. 39, 44.

Quest. Have you any more instances?

Ans. Yes, *Fourthly*, *Casting out Devils.* And those not only where they were of the most stubborn sorts, which had proved * *too hard for his Disciples:* but also where they were in greatest numbers, the Devils ejected by him out of one Man, being called by themselves *Legion*; which notes a *Roman* Army of six thousand Men, *Mark* 5. 9. Yea, not only expelling, but as their awful Judge, whose Rod they dread, and at whose frown they tremble, terrifying them, and forcing them often to *cry out, Let us alone, thou Holy One of God, thou Son of God: we beseech thee torment us not, art thou come to torment us before the time?* Mark 1. 24. Luke 8. 28. Nay, he impowered the *seventy Disciples*, and afterwards the very meanest of his followers, in virtue of his dreadful *Name*, with like Triumph to eject them, *Luke* 10. 17. And what is more, when some that did *not adhere to him*, would try to scare and controul them by his Sacred Name, the trembling Devils fled before them, *Mark* 9. 38. And this is another work peculiar to God, which, whatsoever some Potent *Demons* can, to be sure they never will imitate. Indeed, in some particular instances, the higher Orders may command, and eject some particular inferiour Spirits, and thereby serve their own designs. But to go on ejecting all Ranks and Orders, and those where they are in the greatest numbers and

* Matth. 17. 18, 21.

and combinations, and that with terrors, consternation, and torments; is plainly to commence an open War among themselves, which, as our Saviour argued, must *needs destroy the Devil's Kingdom*, and therefore is a thing too fooliſh and abſurd, to be imagined of intelligent, ſubtle, and deſigning Spirits, *Matth.* 12. 25, 26.

Queſt. I ſee the *Miracles of Jeſus* were evidently diſtinguiſhed from the *lying wonders of Satan*, by the *very kind* of them in theſe inſtances. Pray now ſhow alſo how they were as convincingly diſcriminated, by their *intent and deſign* in all others?

Anſ. Becauſe all the Miracles of *Jeſus* were apparently wrought to exalt the honour, and ſervice of the true God; and to promote the real good of Men; and to plant Tempers, and Practices, diametrically oppoſite to the way and genius of evil Spirits, aiming to root out all thoſe Errors and Superſtitions, which they had cultivated with utmoſt care through all former Ages, to overthrow their Altars, reduce their Worſhippers, and utterly exclude them from all that Domination, which they had ſo long uſurped among Men. And 'tis certain, that a worker of Miracles, for theſe Pious, Heavenly, and Charitable purpoſes, is not acted, or directed by wicked Spirits. For if they ceaſe to be God's Enemies, and ours, they ceaſe to be Devils. If they turn Preachers of Humility, Purity, the Love of God,

and of one another, What becomes of their Apoſtaſie? If they proclaim the God and Father of our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt* to be the only true God, whom we are to fear and worſhip, and themſelves to be fallen Angels, who are no longer to be adored in Temples, hearkened to in their ſuggeſtions, nor imitated in their falſhood, pride, envy, hatred of God and Men, and other practices; they turn Angels of Light, inſtead of being Powers of Darkneſs. The Devils can work no Miracles for theſe ends, except they ſhould firſt turn Saints, and change their Natures. And therefore it was a moſt authentick, and aſſuring mark, which *Jeſus* gave of the truth of his own Miracles, when he called them *the works his Father had given him to finiſh*, that is, which were not wrought for any ill ends, nor out of vanity to exalt his own Praiſe, but to ſerve the ends of God, and ſet on his *Father*'s deſires and purpoſes, *John* 5. 36.

Queſt. Indeed, in ſuch kinds, which ſeem more imitable by created powers, theſe intents and deſigns would indiſputably diſtinguiſh *his ſigns*, from all *Satanical Deluſions.*

Anſ. Yes, and ſo I might add in the laſt place, would his *manner of performance* too. For his uſual way of working wonders, was not by any Magical Rites, and Invocations, but meerly by a Word of his Mouth. *To the wind, and ſea, he ſaid, Peace,*

Peace, and it was still, Mark 4. 39. *to the deaf man's Ears, Be opened*, and instantly *he heard*, *Mark* 7. 34, 35. *to the blind man, Go thy way, thy faith hath made thee see*, and without more ado *he saw* again, *Mark* 10. 52. *to the leper, I will, Be thou cleansed, and his leprosie was cured*, Luke 5. 13. Which way of effecting things, by an all-commanding Word, is as plain an evidence of a Divine Power, as Creating all things was at first: for then God only said, *Let there be light, and there was light*, Gen. 1. 3. *he* only *spake, and it was done, he commanded, and it stood fast*, Psalm 33. 9. Not to mention moreover, the vast number of his Miracles, which more assuredly inferred a Divine Power in him, than in any, nay in all the *Prophets* put together, who lived before him. For whereas the *Jews*, when, to exalt *Moses* and the *Prophets*, they ambitiously make the most of their Miracles, after they have picked up all they can, compute all his only at 76. and all theirs from the beginning of the World to the destruction of the Temple only at 74. which both together make but 150. in above 3000 Years time: this single *Jesus*, in three Years wrought so many, *that were they all written, the world it self would not be able to contain the Books, that should be written of them*, John 21. 25. To all which I might add, lastly, That he did not only show these great, and numerous signs himself in Person; but transmitted the Power to Numbers to

do the same *in his Name*, and conferred this Power on *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, which are things utterly unknown among all the wonder-workers of former times.

Quest. But in this point one thing sticks still with the *Jews*, which is, that *Jesus* and his *Apostles*, in credit of their Miracles, went about to overthrow the Law of *Moses*. And may not they therefore confront all the Miracles wrought in justification of that Law, against theirs?

Ans. They might, to one that accused that Law as forged or erroneous. Which *Jesus* was so far from doing, that he all along makes *Moses* and the *Prophets* his Vouchers, telling the *Jews*, *had you believed Moses, you would have believed me, for he wrote of me*, John 5. 46. and *search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testifie of me*, verse 39.

Quest. But did not those Miracles, when they proved that Law to come from God, prove also that none should come in after-time, to abrogate and annull it?

Ans. No, but on the contrary the Holy Prophets under that Law, declared it should be changed, and all those things subverted, whereto it was adapted, and which were the ground and foundation of it.

Quest. To what things was the *Jewish* Law adapted?

Ans. Their *Moral* Laws, contained in the *Ten* Commandments, were adapted, not to the particular state and circumstances

of

of any place or People, but of the common humane Nature, and therefore were unchangeable. And accordingly, when our Saviour comes to meddle with them, he declares it was *not to deſtroy* or vacate, *but fulfil* and add what was wanting in them, *Matth.* 5. 17, 18. But their *Judicial* Laws, which preſcribed the Rules of Courts and Judgments, were fitted to their external Polity, as they were a civil State in *Canaan*. And as for their *Ceremonial*, which order'd the Rules of their Religion and Worſhip, to omit other ſpecialties therein, that chief part of them about *Sacrifices*, was all to be adminiſtred by *one Family*, viz. † *Aaron's line*, and was limited to *one place*, viz. the * *temple of Jeruſalem*.

† Exod. 28. 1. & 1 Chron. 23. 13.
* Deut. 12. 11, 13, 14. & John 4. 20.

Queſt. And did the Holy Prophets under that Law, foretel any change in that *Prieſthood*, *Temple-worſhip*, and *Civil State*, or talk of any new ſettlement of things, independent on, or inconſiſtent with them?

Anſ. Yes, *In the laſt days*, a known Phraſe for the *days of Meſſiah*, *the mountain of the Lord's houſe*, ſays *Iſaiah*, *ſhall be eſtabliſhed in the top of the mountains, and all nations ſhall flow unto it*, Iſaiah 2. 2. *God's Name ſhall be great among the Gentiles, from the riſing to the ſetting of the ſun, in every place ſhall incenſe be offered to his Name, and a pure offering*: which cannot conſiſt with Worſhipping ſtill in one appropriate place, *viz.* the *Jewiſh* Temple in *Jeruſalem*, Mal. 1. 11. A new Prieſthood ſhall be erected, ſays the *Pſalmiſt*,

mist, in the days of *Christ*, not *after the order* of *Aaron*, but *Melchisedech*, Psalm 110. 4. and then shall *God take* to himself *Priests and Levites out of other nations*, no longer confining his choice to *Aaron*, and his Sons, *Isaiah* 66. 19, 20, 21. a plain sign the *Law was to cease*, when the *Priesthood was*, which had the Ministration of it, *Heb.* 7. 12. About *Messiah*'s time, says the Prophet *Daniel*, *shall God destroy the city, and make an utter desolation*, the *Scepter too departing*, as * *Jacob* foretold, when once *Shilo was come*: and what place then for their Judicial Laws, when they were no longer to be a Nation, nor have any Established Polity, to administer, and judge by them? *He shall* also *destroy the Sanctuary*; and what then becomes of all the Sacrifices, when once the place was demolished, wherein the Law required they should all be offered? *Dan.* 9. 26, 27. In summ, they declare, as I noted before, that God would *set aside the Mosaick Covenant*, by reason of its insufficiency, and *give them a new*, and *better Covenant* in its place. And that he would make this change at that time, when a *woman should compass a Man*, which plainly notes the days of Messiah, *Jeremiah* 31. 22, 31, 32, &c.

* Gen. 49. 10.

Quest. Indeed, these are plain proofs, that the Law of *Moses* was designedly subject unto change in *Messiah*'s days. And if *Jesus* abrogates it, as they foretold he should, 'tis evident he ought not to be looked

looked upon as opposing the *Old Prophets*, for accomplishing their own Predictions?

Ans. Most certainly, but is therein owned and vouched by them, as he was in the event too by God himself, when by the *confusion of Tribes*, and *destruction of the Temple* and *Commonwealth*, by *Vespasian*, he plainly set aside those Laws, by rendring them impossible, and leaving no more place for them. Their *Civil* or *Judicial* Laws, about *Buying* and *Selling*, *Succession into Estates*, *Reparation of Dammages*, *Punishments of Offences*, and other things, are plainly now of no force, having never since then had any standing Polity, or live-Power to put them in Execution. The Laws fixing the *Priesthood in Aaron's line*, and directing their Ministration, have been evidently superseded ever since that Line was utterly undistinguishable, and irrecoverably unknown. The Laws and *Ceremonies* about *Sacrifices*, which were all determined to the Temple at *Jerusalem*, have been apparently out of doors, ever since the Temple was brought to ruine. And those many other Laws observed by learned Men, to be made with a *limited Obligation* to the *Land of Canaan*, are manifestly taken off, since God has irreversibly banished them from thence, and scattered them abroad in every Nation. So that all these Laws are visibly abrogated by God himself, and fallen on course, with the loss of their Country, and

of

of the distinction of Tribes, and with the fall of the Civil State and Temple, which were their Foundation.

Quest. But do not some places speak the perpetuity of some of those Laws, as when the * *Passover*, and the *Precept of* † *First fruits*, and several others, are called a *Statute for ever?* And how can these admit of such change?

* Exod. 12. 17.
† Lev. 23. 14.

Ans. Just as the *Priesthood* did, which was said to *minister to God for ever*, Deut. 18. 5. & 1 Chron. 15. 2. And as the *Temple*, wherein God says *he will take up his rest for ever:* which yet, we all know, for above Sixteen hundred Years has been utterly destroyed, *Psalm* 132. 14. *Perpetual* Statutes, and *unalterable*, are *two* things. Those are *perpetual*, which are made without an express limitation of time, and which must last, till the same Power repeals that enacted them. And thus some Statutes in *Moses's Law* are stiled *perpetual*, not to exclude all Power of Abrogation, but in opposition to some other Pendent Statutes, that were not to oblige till *after a certain time*, as the Law of † *driving out the Canaanites*, which was not to be of force, till they came among them. Or to some, that obliged only in *some certain state* and *condition:* as the Statute for * *going without the Camp*, which related to their State of Peregrination; and the Statutes about the † *Tabernacle*, which was to last only till God chose out a place, where they

† Exod. 23 31. & Num. 33. 52.

* Deut. 23. 12.

† Exod. 40.

they should build him a *Temple*. But among them, those things especially were said to *be for ever*, which were to *continue to the end of any thing*, or last out the *whole course of any period of time*, and till a new Revolution. Thus it is said of *Samuel*, that he was brought to * *abide before the Lord for ever*, that is, all his life time; as in the form of our Law, an Estate is said to be granted and bequeathed to a Man *for ever*, when it is given him for his life: and a *Servant* was said in the † Law to be *for ever*, who was to serve only *till the next* * *Jubilee*, which was a time of general Release, and begun a new reckoning. And thus the Law of *Moses* did last *for ever*, that is, it lasted to the end of that State whereto it was adapted, continuing till *Christ* came, whose time was the beginning of a new Age, commonly known and expressed in the *Jewish* Phrase, by the † *last days*, and the * *last time*, and the † *world to come*. Besides, all the Typical part of that Law, being only in the Nature of an obscure Prophecy, which was a * *School-master to bring us to Christ*, by shadowing out the good things to come by him; it was superseded of course by his fulfilling of them, as all Predictions are by their Accomplishment and Consummation.

* 1 Sam. 1. 22.
† Exod. 21. 6.
* Lev. 25. 40, 41.
† Mic. 4. 1.
* 1 Pet. 1. 20.
† Heb. 2. 5.
* Gal. 3. 24.

Quest. By this I perceive, there is no clashing in designs between our *Jesus*, and *Moses* and the *Prophets*. And when he set aside that Law, it was only as they hoped, and

and foretold he ſhould, by conſummating and fulfilling whatſoever it prefigured, and clearing up what it obſcured, and ſupplying what it omitted, and by ſubſtituting a better Law in its place.

Anſ. Very right. And therefore all the *Old Teſtament* Miracles do not in the leaſt oppoſe, but fortifie and confirm his. So that, as he told the *Jews, if they* really *believed Moſes*, that would lead them to *believe him*; but if they *rejected him*, that very *Moſes, in whom they truſted, would accuſe them*, John 5. 45, 46.

Queſt. By what you have ſaid, 'tis plainly evident, that the *Miracles* which *Jeſus wrought*, were done *by the finger of God:* and then, that naturally follows, which he thereupon infers, therefore *no doubt the kingdom of God is come unto you*, Matth. 12. 28, 29.

But one *Divine Teſtimony* you mentioned beſides all theſe, for proving *Jeſus* to be the *Chriſt*, and that was the Teſtimony of *the Father:* pray make that clear?

Anſ. This Teſtimony *Jeſus* alledges in his own behalf, as an additional evidence to the former Teſtimony of his works. *The ſame works that I do, bear witneſs of me. And the Father* alſo *himſelf, which hath ſent me, hath born witneſs of me*, John 5. 36, 37. & chap. 8. 17, 18.

Queſt.

Quest. But since we are upon Earth, and the *Father* in Heaven, and he doth not visibly appear to converse among Men, how did he give Testimony to him?

Ans. I shall mention *two* ways: *First*, by *audible voices, ye have not at any time heard his voice*, says *Jesus* to the *Jews*, when he mentions his Father's Witness, *John* 5. 37. *Secondly*, By *raising him from the Dead*, and showing him openly in *full possession of his pretences.*

Quest. Was God the *Father* ever heard to say, *Jesus is the Christ*, and declare for him by *audible Voices?*

Ans. Yes, several times. He appeared cloathed with Light and Brightness, the usual visible Symbol of his presence, as he did of old to *Moses at the Bush*, and thence gave a vocal Testimony to *Jesus*, in as plain and intelligible words, as before he had used to *Moses*, or as we can use in giving Testimony to one another. This he did first at his *Baptism*, before *John the Baptist*, saying, *This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased*, Matth. 3. 17. And again at his *Transfiguration*, before *three* of his *Apostles*, *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, when *out of the bright cloud a voice came, saying, This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him*, Matth. 17. 1, 5. Which Voice, saith S. *Peter*, *from the excellent Glory of God the Father, we heard, when*

when we were with him in the Holy mount, and were eye-witnesses of his Majesty, 2 Pet. 1. 16, 17, 18. And the same he repeated again a *third* time before a Multitude, when *Andrew and Philip brought the Greeks to him.* For before them all, *Jesus Prayed, Father, Glorifie thy Name.* And thereupon *came a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorifie it again*, John 12. 28. And this is a most sensible, and satisfactory way of God's declaring himself, not meerly by shows and resemblances of things, which are impressed by Visions and Dreams upon Mens imaginations, but by plain, proper, and significant words, such as he used in conversing with *Adam in paradise*, Genesis 3. 8, 9. and with *Moses at the bush*, Exodus 3. 4. when assuming a Glorious Light, the usual way of shewing himself particularly present, he spoke to Men out of it, in an audible Voice, as sensibly, and intelligibly, as a Man can talk and discourse with his Friend.

Quest. Did the *Father* also testifie *Jesus to be the Christ*, by *raising him from the Dead*, and shewing him openly in *full possession of his pretences?*

Ans. Yes, *on the third day, he rose again*, as we profess in the *Creed.* And Almighty * *God*, as S. *Peter* saith, *raised him up.* And hereby he did plainly testifie, and vouch for him. For after the

* Act. 2. 24, 32.

Jews

Jews had done their worſt, condemning, and cruelly executing him: in raiſing him up again, God viſibly reverſed their Sentence, and undid what they had done, and juſtified him as one that deſerved not to continue under the Power of Death, but to live again. He was put to Death in the Fleſh, but *juſtified in the Spirit*, viz. by that Divine Spirit, which raiſed him from the Dead, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. He was *declared to be the Son of God with power, by the reſurrection from the dead*, Rom. 1. 4. Nay, after his Reſurrection, he ſet him in Heaven, at his own right Hand, ſurrounded with a Divine Glory, the uſual Symbol of God's Preſence and Majeſty. In which auguſt form, he ſhewed him to * *Stephen*, to prepare him for his *Martyrdom*; and to † *Saul*, at his *Converſion*; *Jeſus* appearing to them from God's right Hand, in a *Glory* that ſurpaſſed the *Brightneſs of the Sun*. And having enthroned him there, he intruſted him with the *Holy Ghoſt*, to diſpoſe of it as he pleaſed; a plain Evidence of his having *all Power in Heaven*, as well as *on Earth*, as he pretended. Which Power he viſibly manifeſted to all Men, not only by ſending down the Holy Spirit, in all variety of moſt ſtupendious Gifts, upon his own *Apoſtles*; but enabling them, by *impoſition of Hands in his Name*, to confer the ſame upon innumerable Multitudes of his follow-

* Act. 7. 55.
† Act. 26. 13, 14, 16.

ers,

ers, as appears, from the *Acts* of the *Holy Apostles*, and from other *Scriptures*.

Quest. I will not ask you for any more Evidence in this great point, of *Jesus being the Christ*: such demonstrations, as you have insisted on, being abundantly sufficient to gain belief from every honest mind, that is careful to inquire, and willing to be informed. And as for others, who are wantonly captious, or wilfully blind and incredulous, they are not to be convinced by Reason and Arguments.

But building on this now, as most unquestionably sure, That *Jesus is the Christ*, doth not that undeniably prove the *Divine Authority of the New Testament*, which is his Word?

Ans. Most certainly it doth. For that contains only what he either spoke, or acted himself in his Life; or ordered his *Apostles* to do, and teach in his Name, after his Death. The same Proofs and Testimonies, which justifie him, do authorize it; since it only sets out to us all that Word, in declaration whereof all the Evidences urged hitherto are to gain him credit.

Quest. I am fully satisfied of the certainty, and have heard enough to convince me of the usefulness, and efficacy of *Faith in Christ*. I would desire now to hear something more of the particular points of that Faith, whereof we are to be

be thus firmly perſuaded, and whereby ſuch admirable things are to be performed.

Anſ. Thoſe, as I hinted at firſt, are ſummed up in that *ſhort Creed*, into the profeſſion whereof we are all Baptized. And that I ſhall next endeavour to diſcourſe on, and explain to you.

THE Knowledge of GOD: OR, AN EXPLICATION OF THE Divine Attributes, AND PROVIDENCE.

The Knowledge of God: or, an Explication of the Divine Attributes, and Providence.

CHAP. I.

Of the Being, and Attributes of God.

The Contents.

The World declares there is a God. He is an eternal Spirit, on whom all things depend. Of God's Holineſs. *Several things explained, which ſeem to infringe it: as when God is ſaid to harden Mens hearts. To inflict Spiritual blindneſs, and a reprobate ſenſe. To ſend a falſe Spirit to deceive* Ahab: *and ſtrong deluſion. God oft gives Men up to the deluſion of evil Spirits. Cautions to prevent this. To give Men a Spirit of ſlumber. An account, how notwithſtanding God's irreconcileable hatred of ſin, it is ſtill ſuffered in the World. Of God's* Goodneſs. *Several falſe Notions of it. In what things it chiefly conſiſts. Of God's* Juſtice, or Righteouſneſs. *This ſhown in giving Righteous Laws. And paſſing Righteous Judgments according to them,*

without reſpect of Perſons. His Punitive Juſtice cleared from miſplacing puniſhments, in puniſhing one for another's ſins. And from miſproportioning them, in allotting eternal puniſhments, to mementany ſins. Some falſe aſperſions on this juſt God wiped off. Of God's Preſence in all places. *The effect of this. Of his* Faithfulneſs. *This ſhown by inviolable performance of his Promiſes: And interpreting them without evaſion, or ſecret reſerve, according to their plain meanings. And by conſtant adherence to his Friends and Faithful Servants: which is no encouragement for any to return to their former ſins. Of God's* Wiſdom. *This ſhown in ſetting a juſt rate and eſtimate on all things; ſo that he is neither gained, nor loſt by worthleſs ſervices. In diſcerning the juſt power and force of all Means, and ſucceſs of all Methods; which ſhould beget the greateſt Reverence for all his Ordinances. In ſeeing the beſt times, and ſeaſons, for every purpoſe: ſo that we muſt never think any Deliverance too long delayed, or Affliction too faſt haſtened. No reaſon to pretend to the Love of God, without loving, and imitating theſe Divine Excellencies.*

Queſtion. WHat are the *Articles of Chriſtian Faith*, or particular points, which we Chriſtians are to believe?

Anſwer. They are all contained in this Creed, commonly called the *Apoſtles Creed*; *I be-*

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of Heaven and Earth. And in Jeſus Chriſt, his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghoſt, born of the Virgin Mary, *ſuffered under* Pontius Pilate, *was crucified, dead, and buried, he deſcended into Hell; the third day he roſe again from the dead, he aſcended into Heaven, and ſitteth at the right Hand of God the Father Almighty, from thence he ſhall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghoſt; the Holy Catholick Church; the Communion of Saints; the Forgiveneſs of Sins; the Reſurrection of the Body; and the Life Everlaſting.* Amen.

Queſt. Doth this *Creed* contain all points of Doctrine, neceſſary to be believed by every Chriſtian?

Anſ. Yes, for it was given for a Confeſſion of Faith, that ſhould fit Men for *Baptiſm*, and ſhew any Perſon to be a Chriſtian: and they had better have made no Rule, or Confeſſion of Faith at all, than an imperfect one.

Queſt. What do you make the *firſt* Article in this Creed?

Anſ. I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of Heaven and Earth.

Queſt. How doth it appear that there is a God?

Anſ. From this vaſt World, that he has made. Even as we are unqueſtionably aſſured of the Being of a Skilful Architect, where we ſee a ſtately, and well contrived Houſe erected; or of a learned Author;

from an excellent, and well-penned Book; or of an Ingenious Artificer, from a Watch of exact, and various Movements, or other elaborate, and curious piece of Workmanſhip. And this ſhows us, not only that there is a God, on whom we, and all this created World depend: but alſo that he is moſt Wiſe, Powerful, and Good; becauſe the greateſt Power, Wiſdom, and Goodneſs, are every where apparent in the contrivance, and formation of it. For *the invisible things of God, even his eternal Power and Godhead, are clearly ſeen from the Creation of the World, being underſtood by the things that are made*, as S. *Paul* ſays, *Rom.* 1. 20.

Queſt. Indeed, nothing in reaſon ſeems more obvious, than that all this World muſt have an Architect; and that we, and all the things about us, which every where ſpring up and periſh, could never make our ſelves; and that things of ſuch admirable Order, Harmony, and Uſefulneſs, could not any one, and much leſs all of them, be put together by blind and unconriving chance. And therefore, methinks, this proof of *God's Being*, from the *voice of his Works*, muſt needs convince all his reaſonable Creatures?

Anſ. Yes, and ever ſince the World began, ſo it has. *There is neither ſpeech nor language, where their voice is not heard: their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world*, Pſal. 19. 3, 4.

On

On this, or other Arguments, all People, in every Age, and Nation, believed, and acknowledged that there is a God, and delivered down that Belief to thoſe who followed them. And therefore no Perſon can ever oppoſe this, and pretend to reaſon, ſince thereby, he ſets up himſelf againſt all People of every place and time, and againſt what paſſed for the plaineſt, and moſt unconteſtable Principle of humane reaſon, ever ſince there was any ſuch thing. So that if therein he has reaſon, he has it to himſelf alone, and all the preſent World beſides, yea, and all Ages too that went before him, had none.

Queſt. What things are we to know, and believe concerning God?

Anſ. Firſt, His *God-head, and Divine Attributes. Secondly, His Providence.*

Queſt. There is nothing in all Religion more neceſſary, or uſeful for us, than to have a right apprehenſion of Almighty God. Is he like any thing, which we behold with our Eyes, or feel with our Hands, or diſcern by any Bodily Senſes?

Anſ. No; in *Scripture*, indeed, he is ſaid to have *Ears*, and *Eyes*, and *Hands*, and *Feet*. But therein, as the *Jewiſh Rabbins* ſay, *the Law ſpeaks of God with the Tongue of the Children of Men.* And we are to underſtand, not that he has any ſuch parts, but only that he has as full perceptions, and performs the ſame things, as we do by them. The inviſible God, *whom no man hath ſeen,*

or

or can ſee, 1 Tim. 6. 16. *is a Spirit*, ſays our Saviour, *John* 4. 24. And this muſt teach us in all our Services, which we pay to him, never to think of putting him off with outward Shows, Gifts, and Ceremonies; but to be inwardly affected in all we do, or ſay, and always to offer him our Hearts, and Spirits: For *he being a Spirit, muſt be worſhipped*, as *Chriſt* ſaid, *in ſpirit and in truth*, John 4. 24. And moreover, never to make any Bodily Images, and repreſentations of him; or fancy to give him Worſhip, and Honour by them: ſince a pure unbodied Spirit, is not repreſented, but * belyed; not honoured; but debaſed by any ſuch thing. *Ye ſaw* † *no manner of ſimilitude of God*, when he came and *ſpake to you*, ſaid *Moſes* to the *Jews*, *therefore take good heed, leſt ye corrupt your ſelves in making any of him*, Deut. 4. 15, 16. And *thou ſhalt not make to thee any likeneſs, of any thing*, either *in Heaven, or Earth, to bow down to them*, ſaid the *Law*, Exod. 20. 4, 5.

* Rom. 1. 23, 25. Iſ. 44. 20.
† Iſ. 40. 18.

Queſt. But although we cannot ſee him with our Eyes, yet we may apprehend ſeveral things of him in our minds. And one, you ſay, is his *God-head:* what mean you by that?

Anſ. His *Sovereignty*, or being the Supreme Being, that depends on none, and that all other things depend upon. Particularly Men, who were at firſt made by him, and ſtill abſolutely depend on him. *In him we live, move, and have our being*, Act. 17. 28.

Queſt.

Queſt. If he depends on none, he muſt be an eternal Being, which never had beginning?

Anſ. Yes, becauſe there was nothing before him, to give beginning to him. So that if he had not been from all Eternity, he could never have been at all.

Queſt. And if all things elſe, but eſpecially all Men, do abſolutely depend on him, that will make all careful to ſerve and pleaſe him, and found Religion?

Anſ. Undoubtedly ſo it ſhould. And where it is not only believed, but ſeriouſly laid to heart, ſo it will.

Queſt. What are the *Divine Attributes*, or Properties of God, which will ſhow us how he ſtands affected, and what will pleaſe him?

Anſ. He is all *Holineſs*, *Goodneſs*, *Juſtice*, *Faithfulneſs*, *Wiſdom*, *Almighty*, *every where preſent*, and *can never change*.

Queſt. What is meant by God's *Natural Purity* and *Holineſs*.

Anſ. His abſolute exemption from all ſin in himſelf, and his perfect averſation, and immutable hatred of it in all others. He can *take no pleaſure in wickedneſs*, *he hates all workers of iniquity*, and therefore *evil ſhall not dwell with him*, Pſal. 5. 4, 5.

Queſt. If this be his unalterable Nature, he can never be reconciled to Mens ſins, nor take delight in any Man, whilſt he goes on to be a ſinner?

Anſ.

Anſ. No; as ſoon may we hope to bring Light and Darkneſs, Snow and Fire to dwell together. So far is he from living with it, that he cannot endure *to look upon iniquity*, Habak. 1. 13.

Queſt. Since God's Holineſs beſpeaks ſuch abſolute abhorrence of all vice and wickedneſs, I ſee it implies ſomething more, than barely his affectation of External Decency, or his hatred to be treated rudely and unmannerly.

Anſ. Yes, ſo it doth. It implies that too. For God's Holineſs, † often notes his ſupereminent Power, and Greatneſs. And to uſe this peerleſs Majeſty, or any things appropriated to it, without that ſeparate Honour, and viſible Reverence, which is due to them, is to *unhallow* and *prophane* him; which he ſays in *Ezekiel* the *Prieſts* did, when *they put no difference between the holy and prophane*, Ezek. 22. 26. Our great, and matchleſs Creator, muſt have a diſtinguiſhing reſpect, and honour, viſibly paid him in our outward behaviour. And when in *Gifts* and *Preſents*, ſome would ſhew viſible neglect, and diſhonour of him; he complained they did not treat him as *a Great*, and *Dreadful King*: adding, that herein their undutifulneſs might evidently appear, becauſe they durſt not go ſo, to pay reſpect to any Temporal *Governour* or Superiour, *Mal.* 1. 8, 13, 14. But, though this *hatred of External irreverence*, be one thing implied in it; yet is it but the outſide

† Pſal. 89. 18. Iſa. 6. 3. Habak. 1. 12.

ſide of God's Holineſs. And therefore no Man muſt ever think to content him, by Ceremonious Formalities, as being extreme nice and ſcrupulouſly careful about the Place, the Garb, the Poſture, or other decent Dreſs, or circumſtance of his Worſhip and Service; except at the ſame time he ſhun all ſin and wickedneſs, which affront him moſt of all, and bear the directeſt oppoſition to his Holineſs. As this without the other, is Spiritual ill Breeding, and Clowniſh Ruſticity: ſo is the other without it, mere Form and Complement, and an empty unprofitable Ceremony.

Queſt. If this Holy God is ſo irreconcileably ſet againſt ſin, ſure he can never be the Author of it?

Anſ. No; *let no Man ſay when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither doth he tempt* or incite *any man* to it, *James* 1. 13. The *Devil* tempts us, who is called *the Tempter* in the *Scriptures*, Matth. 4. 3. And *wicked men*, who are his Inſtruments. And *our own Luſts* moſt of all, when they *draw us away*, and *intice us to evil*, as S. *James* ſays, *James* 1. 14. But as for the moſt Holy God, the concern he has about our ſins, is in no wiſe to decree, or help them on, but only to forbid, and puniſh them. *He has no pleaſure in wickedneſs*, or, as the * *Septuagint* tranſlate it, *he doth not will it*, Pſal. 5. 4.

* Οὐχὶ θέλων ἀνομίαν.

Queſt.

Quest. But doth not God himself say, That *he had hardned Pharaoh's heart, and the heart of his servants*, Exod. 10. 1. and *Chap.* 14. 4, 17. and is it not also said, that *he moved David to number Israel, and Judah*, 2 Sam. 24. 1.

Ans. Yes, but God did these, not by way of positive influence and efficiency, as a concurrent cause; but only by withdrawing his Grace, and leaving Men to be hardned by their own Lusts, and by evil Spirits. And thus of *Pharaoh* 'tis said, that *he hardned his own heart*, Exod. 8. 15, 32. and of *David*, that *Satan moved him to number the people*, 1 Chron. 21. 1.

Quest. But doth not his withdrawing of his Grace, show a willingness to have sin take place, and that although he is loth to do it himself, yet he is free, Men should be hardned by others?

Ans. No; 'tis only when he is put to it as a Wise, and upright Judge, in way of Justice. For he never withdraws his Grace, and thereby leaves Men to their own Lusts, and malignant Spirits, till they have first made a forfeiture of it, by reiterated repulses and affronts, or some high provocations. Thus in the Story of *Pharaoh* in *Exodus*, (except what is said, *Chap.* 7. 13. *he hardned Pharaoh's heart*, which, as the * Learned note, may as well be rendred *Pharaoh's heart was hardned*, as the same word is rendred *verse* 22. God is not said thus *to harden Pharaoh's heart*, and *send all his*

* Dr. *Hammond's Annot.* on Rom. 9. 18.

his plagues upon his heart, chap. 9. 12, 14. till *Pharaoh* had ſeveral times wickedly diſobeyed, and wilfully *hardned his own heart*, chap. 8. 15, 32. And when 'tis ſaid, that *God moved David to number the people*, 'tis added, that their ſins had provoked him to *Anger*, which made him give him up to it, 2 *Sam.* 24. 1. God's Grace and Holy Spirit, is always repulſed and driven away, before he recals it from Men, and thereby gives them up to an evil Luſt, or an infernal Spirit, to harden, and work in them.

Queſt. What ſay you when God threatens Men with *Spiritual Blindneſs*, that they ſhall *look on without ſeeing*, and *hear without underſtanding*, Iſaiah 6. 9. Which Judgment S. *Paul* teſtifies, was *befallen the unbelieving Jews*, Rom. 11. 7, 25. As our *Lord* himſelf alſo noted, *Matth.* 13. 14, 15.

Anſ. Not that he inſtils into them any errors, or puſhes and precipitates them on to any wicked act, without opening their Eyes. But only that he leaves them to their own violent and blind prejudices, which will neither let them hear, nor ſee any thing, that makes againſt them: and withdraws clear means of knowledge, after they have long ſlighted, and abuſed them; as our Saviour did from the *blinded Jews, therefore*, as he ſays, *ſpeaking to them in Parables, becauſe ſeeing they ſaw not, and hearing they heard not*, that is, they would not

not be made to ſee, and hear, by plain Speeches, *Matth.* 13. 13. This infliction of Spiritual blindneſs, S. *Paul*, in the caſe of the *Romans*, calls *giving up to a reprobate ſenſe*, Rom. 1. 28. Whereto God then gave them up, when, they of themſelves having already gone far in wickedneſs contracting it, he juſtly left them to it. *Whilſt they knew God*, they gave him no *due glory* and *acknowledgment*; and thereupon *he gave them over to a reprobate mind*, verſe 21, 28. Their reprobate ſenſe, *verſe* 28. was the woful conſequent of their own *foul luſts*, and *precontracted fooliſhneſs*, noted *verſe* 21, 23, 25, 26. God did not leave them, till they had firſt, by falſe worſhip and filthy practices, not only deſerted, but driven him, and his enlightening Spirit, away from them.

Queſt. But what ſay you to *Ahab's caſe*, did not God himſelf deceive him?

Anſ. No; but only left him to be deceived by a wicked Spirit; and that not till *Ahab had ſold himſelf to work wickedneſs*, and thereby moſt juſtly deſerved to be deſerted by him. The wicked Spirits, though they have will enough to hurt us, yet are held in Chains and Fetters, and are not let looſe, or in power to work their wills, till they have God's Licence. And therefore when the good Angels, from their ſeveral earthly charges, return back to God to make their reports, ſome wicked ones, as 'tis repreſented in the Story of *Job*, ſtill croud

croud in among them, to gain Commiſſions, either for trial or puniſhment, and ſee who will be delivered into their hands. Thus *Satan* did, when he obtained power againſt *Job*, for a *trial of his patience*, Job 1. 6. And thus on another ſet day, when God publickly decreed the *fall of Ahab*, an evil Spirit preſents himſelf, and voluntarily offers to *be a lying Spirit in the mouth of all his Prophets*, to encourage him to his *fall at Ramoth Gilead*, in deſerved puniſhment of his wickedneſs. And God not only foretels, that *Ahab* would hear him; but bids him go, and do ſo, as * *Chriſt bid Judas* when he *went out to betray him*, (as alſo the † *Devils*, when *they entred into the herd of ſwine*,) not thereby commanding and authorizing his Practice, but only taking off his reſtraint, and letting him looſe to his own wicked purpoſes, by way of permiſſion and ſufferance, 1 *King* 22. 19, 20, 21, 22.

* Joh. 13. 27.
† Matth. 8. 32.

Queſt. And is that S. *Paul's* meaning, when under the *great myſtery of iniquity*, or *Man of ſin*, he ſays, *God ſhall ſend men, who loved not the truth, but had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs, ſtrong deluſion*, 2 Theſſ. 2. 11.

Anſ. Yes, that deluſion was to be, by giving evil Spirits Licence to delude them. It ſhall *come with all deceivableneſs of power, and ſigns, and lying wonders, after the working of Satan*, verſe 9, 10. So that God's ſending ſtrong deluſion in thoſe days, is letting *Satan* looſe, and permitting him to give plauſible proofs, and ſhows, to ſeduce

Men. Which, with thoſe that loved unrighteouſneſs, and had *no love for the truth*, but would be glad of any pretence to embrace a pleaſing error inſtead of it, would be like enough to prevail.

Queſt. Doth God often give Men up thus to evil Spirits, to delude them?

Anſ. Yes, evil Spirits have a general influence, in producing the errors, as well as the ſins and tranſgreſſions, of all Men. But they have often a more eſpecial Licence, and extraordinary power of deluſion, in degree ſometimes greater, and ſometimes leſs, according as any Perſons, or Places, through their own wickedneſs, their pride, and wantonneſs, are left more or leſs to themſelves, and thrown out of God's protection. Thus *the darkneſs of the* Heathen *World* or * *Age*, S. *Paul* aſcribes *to the ſpiritual wickedneſſes in high* or † *heavenly places*, or to the * *wicked Spirits* in the Air called Heaven in the *Jewiſh* Books, who were *the Rulers* of it, *Eph.* 6. 12. And in account of the *deluded nations*, we are told, that *the old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, had deceived them*, Rev. 20. 2, 3, 8. And the general Apoſtaſie and Deluſion, by *the Man of ſin*, is aſcribed by the *Apoſtle*, as I noted, *to the working of Satan*, 2 Theſſ. 2. 9, 10, 11. And on the riſing of any *notable Hereticks*, and *perverters of the truth*, the *crafty* and *malignant*

* Ἀιῶνος.

† Επουρανίοις.

* Πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας: or as the *Syriack* Verſion reads it, πνεύματα.

nant Devil is uſually ſaid to *ſtir*, and *rage*, in the *Eccleſiaſtical* Language. The great deceits and deluſions of the World, are not owing only to the darkneſs of Mens own minds, and hearts; but to the malignant fraud of wicked Spirits, who by themſelves, and their inſtruments, miſerably blind and miſlead ſuch, as are forſaken of God, and delivered into their hands. And therefore it need not ſeem ſtrange to us, if we ſee Men abuſed into ſuch groſs abſurdities, as are againſt the plaineſt Scriptures, Reaſon, and common Senſe. Nay, though they be as confident of them, as if they received them by *immediate inſpiration*, and a *voice from Heaven*; and think they have as ſure *Revelations*, for their *ſenſleſs*, and *abſurd dreams*, as ever the *bleſſed Apoſtles*, and *Evangeliſts* had, for the *Holy Scriptures*. For though ſeveral of theſe ſeem too groſs, for the natural folly of Men; yet are they not for the malignity of a deluſive Dæmon. When he has gained a Licence to beſot, and abuſe Mens minds, we need not ſtand aſtoniſhed at the moſt extravagantly ſenſleſs, or ridiculous Opinions.

Queſt. If this is one method of God's Juſtice, to give up thoſe, who abuſe the Light, and the means thereof, to *Satan's deluſion*; muſt not this make us all exceeding careful, with Humility, and Reverence, to keep in his ways and appointments, that ſo we may abide under his Protection?

Anſ. Moſt certainly. And therefore by all means we muſt have a care, not to ſet our ſelves above Ordinances, to vilifie Prayers or Preaching, to deſpiſe Sacraments, to diſparage the Sacred Scriptures, to contemn ſuperciliouſly and outbrave our Miniſters, making our ſelves wiſer than our Teachers, to caſt off the Government of our Lawful Paſtors, or break the Unity of the Church, or ſuch things. For this is breaking all God's Bounds, and diſcarding his Methods, appointed to keep us all ſtable, in the knowledge, and practice of the Truth. And if we thus leave him, and wantonly leap out of all his ways, we have juſt cauſe to fear, leſt he leave us: and then we are ready to become a prey to evil Spirits, who, as they get leave in more or leſs degrees, will carry us away with their deluſions.

Queſt. You think then, that there is leſs danger of theſe deluſions, whilſt Men keep humbly, and awfully, in the Unity and Communion of *Chriſt*'s Church, than when they depart from it?

Anſ. Yes, by breaking out thence, they are got into a place more inſecure, and more full of danger. As out-lying Deer, no more under the Eye and Care of the Keeper, are ready to become a prey to every Hunter. Or, as Sheep without the Fold, whilſt they ſtraggle from the Flock, and out of the compaſs of that ſpecial Providence which protects it, are in danger by

by every hurtful Beaſt to be made a prey, and picked up. Or, as near an Enemies Quarters, they who will run abroad without the Camp, are in danger of being ſeized, or ſlain by Adverſaries: ſo are Men without the Church, by evil Spirits. For they are more at liberty, and let looſe in the World, though chain'd and fetter'd in the *Church*; and if they find any leap'd out thence, are more likely to ſeize them, as ſtraves in their own Dominions.

Queſt. Indeed, that which reſtrains their malice, is the Protection of God, which is called *the Hedge*, that fenced off *Satan from Job*, Job 1. 10. And ſince all have not an equal ſhare in the Guardianſhip of Almighty God, and of his good Angels, 'tis obvious to infer, that theſe impure Spirits have more power in ſome Places, and over ſome Perſons, than over others.

Anſ. Yes, and this the *Damon* in * *Tertullian* urged for himſelf, who being *charged by ſome*, that in thoſe *days of Miracles* came to eject him, and rebuked for *daring to attempt, and poſſeſs a Chriſtian Woman*, who was liſted under *Chriſt*'s Protection; *conſtantly pleaded, his ſeiſure was moſt juſt, becauſe he found her in his own Precincts*, viz. at the lewd, bloody, and ungodly ſhows, in the *Heathen Theatres*. This Power of *evil Spirits*, is greateſt in the unhallowed World; as the *Scripture* ſufficiently intimates, when *Satan* is called by our *Lord*, *the Prince of this world*, John 12. 31. and *chap.* 14. 30. and 16.

* *De Spectac. c.* 26.

16. 11. and by S. *Paul*, *the God of this world*, 2 Cor. 4. 3. and when the *Apoſtle* aſcribes *the darkneſs of the Heathen world*, to *wicked ſpirits*, who had *the rule* and Empire of it, *Eph.* 6. 12. and *wrought in thoſe that were diſobedient*, or the * *unperſuadable* part of Mankind, *Eph.* 2. 2. So that they are able to do moſt, before Men are entred into the *Covenant*, and *Church of God:* as from the danger *Moſes* was in, before he had *Circumciſed his Son*, the *Jewiſh Doctors* note the Power of a *deſtroying Angel* on ſuch, as have not received the initiatory Rite of *Circumciſion*; anſwerable whereto is that *old* † *tradition* among them, that *God exempted their Nation from the Power of the Angel of death, to which he ſubjected the reſt of the World, when he choſe them for his own People, and gave them the Law.* Or when, being once enter'd, they either burſt out of it themſelves, or by juſt excommunication, which, as our *Lord* * ſays, brings Men back into the ſtate *of the Heathen*, are caſt out into the World again. For then, the Devils obtain more Power over them: as S. *Paul* notes, ſaying of thoſe that grow turbulent in the Church, and *oppoſe themſelves*, that they are *taken captive by him*, 2 Tim. 2. 25, 26. and calling *excommunication*, a *delivering over unto Satan*, as it throws them out into his Territory, and within the verge of his Dominion, 1 *Cor.* 5. 5. & 1 *Tim.* 1. 20. Yea, probably, their attempts are more greedy, and violent upon thoſe, who for a while were reſcued

* Τοῖς τῆς ἀπειθείας.

† Dr. *Lightfoot's Hor. Heb.* in Joh. 12. 31.

* Matth. 18. 17.

reſcued out of their hands, than on others, who were held always under them. And accordingly, in the *Parable of the unclean Spirit* we are told, that if, being *once driven out of a man*, he find him *empty*, and naked of Guards, and ſo fit to be made a prey again; *he takes with him ſeven Spirits worſe than himſelf*, when he ſeeks to enter into him the ſecond time, *Matth.* 12. 43, 44, 45. & 2 *Pet.* 2. 20.

Queſt. Would you note any thing elſe, that is like to provoke God to abandon, and give us up to theſe deluding Spirits?

Anſ. Yes, to omit others, buying and ſelling of the Truth, or acting for Gain, againſt God, and a good Conſcience. When Men forſake God, or a good way or thing, not out of ſincere convictions, but ſecular intereſts, and for worldly gain: then doth the *Devil* enter, and take poſſeſſion of them. For his great way is to open the Door by a golden Key, and by the offers of gain to get admiſſion. And thus he *enter'd into Judas*, taking poſſeſſion of him by *thirty pieces of ſilver*, which he preferred before *his Maſter*, Luk. 22. 3, 4, 5. And into *Ananias*, getting him into his Power, and *filling his heart*, by a deſire of *keeping the price of his land* to himſelf, *Act.* 5. 3. When Men once put themſelves into Satan's hands, by *putting away a good conſcience*, and profeſſing, or acting againſt convictions; they are in the ready way,

as S. *Paul* ſays, to *make ſhipwrack of the* right *Faith*, and fall under a deluſion of their underſtandings, 2 *Tim.* 1. 19.

Queſt. But doth not God himſelf do more than ſuffer, and give way to ſin, by leaving them to their own Luſts, or to Satan, as you ſay, to puſh them on, when he talks of *giving men a ſpirit of ſlumber*, Rom. 11. 8, 10. & Iſaiah 6. 10. Is not that ſomething poſitive of his inflicting?

Anſ. 'Tis like it is a ſending a ſluggiſhneſs of thought, or a dulneſs and drowſineſs of apprehenſion on them. Not ſuch, as makes them quite unable to apprehend; but only, like a drowſie Man, more liſtleſs, heavy, and ſlow in it. 'Tis *eyes, wherewith they ſhould not ſee; and ears, wherewith they ſhould not hear*; that is, ſuch wherewith they would not, becauſe they could not do it eaſily, *Rom.* 11. 8. Such abatement of intellectual perſpicacity, and power, God ſometimes threatens to obdurate ſinners, ſaying, *he will ſmite them with madneſs, or blindneſs*, or *aſtoniſhment*, and ſtupidity *of heart*, Deut. 28. 28. And this is very juſt, thus to impair the perfection of our minds, as well as the health and ſtrength of our Bodies, in puniſhment of our ſins. For both theſe, being his gratuitous and undeſerved gifts, are reverſible in what meaſure he pleaſes. And he never withdraws them in his wrath from contumacious ſinners, but on forfeiture and high provocations, when they have winked long againſt the Light,

Light, and would not ſee with quick and clear ſenſes. It is all in way of Juſtice, and Judicial Proceſs; ſo that there is nothing, but what ſhows a Holy, a Juſt, and Good God too, in all this.

Queſt. But if God ſo irreconcileably hates ſin, why doth he not employ his Power to keep it out? Were it not eaſie for an Almighty God, to prevent ſin in the World, if he would?

Anſ. It is not fit he ſhould make it impoſſible, by putting it out of our power to chuſe it. And as for ſuch ways, as infer no force upon our wills, but conſiſt with our free and rewardable avoidance of ſin, he has not been wanting in them, which is all that is to be expected on his part.

Queſt. Why, to eaſe both himſelf, and us, of the evil of ſin, might not God make it impoſſible, and put it out of our power to chuſe it?

Anſ. Becauſe that is inconſiſtent with our Natures, who, having Fleſh as well as Spirit, muſt needs be free to Evil, as well as Good. It would leave nothing in us to be commended, or rewarded, when we do abſtain from it; there being no thanks due to any Man, for omitting what he was utterly incapable to act. To make ſin impoſſible, is to offer violence to our free and reaſonable Natures, and to ſet aſide all Laws, all Cenſure, and reward of Actions. Which no reaſon will expect a Holy God

God ſhould do, who looks not only at his own Power and Holineſs, but at the diſplaying of his Governing-Juſtice too, and the Freedom and Liberty of his Creatures, and will take ſuch ways to keep out ſin, as beſt comport with all theſe. So that an utter incapacity for it, is no way of hindring us free and rewardable Creatures, who are not to be irreſiſtably forced and compelled, but drawn and perſuaded.

Queſt. And has God done all, that can reaſonably be expected that way, to prevent ſin?

Anſ. Yes, he has given his own Son to die a cruel Death, thereby to purchaſe Mercy for all that truly repent of their ſins; he has plainly ſhowed, and forbid all ſin, that no Perſon need be ignorant of it; he has threatned it with the moſt inſupportable puniſhments, that all may be afraid to come near it; he offers the moſt incomparable rewards, to all that will overcome it; and promiſes the aid of an unconquerable Spirit and Grace, to enable all, who will ſtrive as they ought, to prevail againſt it. In ſumm, having ſtupendiouſly brought about, by the meritorious Death of his own Son, that Mercy ſhould be offered to all Men to pardon, and Grace to extirpate and aboliſh ſin: he has left nothing wanting, but their own wills, to perfect the conqueſt of it. And he has done all that for them, and ſet all thoſe things

things before them, which ſhould, not force their wills, indeed, but bend and perſuade them to reſolve upon ſuch conqueſt. And that is all, which ought to be done with free Creatures, whoſe wills are not to be forced, but won and perſuaded, towards its excluſion. So that if after all, ſin be in the World, God's Holineſs, and, I may add, his Goodneſs too, are not to be charged, as if they had not abundantly done their part: but only the obſtinacy of Mens own perverſe wills, which are not to be forced, and will not be diſſuaded from it, by all that can be fitly and reaſonably offered to them. And therefore it may ſtill be moſt juſtly ſaid of God, as the *Scripture* doth, *What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?* Iſaiah 5. 4. *The Lord is not willing that any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to repentance*, 2 Pet. 3. 9. *As I live, ſaith the Lord God, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but* had rather *that the wicked* man would *turn from his way, and live*, Ezek. 33. 11.

Queſt. Another of *God's Attributes* you mentioned, is his *Goodneſs*. Is *God's Goodneſs* an *undiſtinguiſhing Indulgence*, that lights promiſcuouſly on all Perſons?

Anſ. No, 'tis a Wiſe and Holy Goodneſs, that reſpects qualifications. 'Tis the Goodneſs of a juſt God, not of a fond Man, and ſo is prone to all tenderneſs, that is conſiſtent with Wiſe and Holy Ends,

Ends, and Governing Juſtice. But tenderneſs and indulgence to ill things, and for ill purpoſes and effects, is not goodneſs, but dotage.

Queſt. So that God's Goodneſs doth not beſpeak ſuch tenderneſs, as relents at the very ſight of all miſerable objects?

Anſ. No, when Love and Kindneſs have been finally abuſed by them, affronted Goodneſs gives way to inflamed Juſtice, and can ſee Men ſmart and ſuffer, without being grieved for them.

Queſt. Then we muſt not fancy God's Mercy is ſuch an effeminate ſoftneſs, and fond pity, as ſtarts at the thoughts of any ſeverity, though moſt wholeſome and neceſſary?

Anſ. No, it is Mercy to the Penitent, and Pitiable; but can well bear to ſee tormenting Cures wrought, on diſeaſed, and ſtraying offenders; or Vengeance executed, on obdurate Criminals.

Queſt. Neither is his Goodneſs ſuch eaſineſs, as will be won or wearied out, purely by the confidence in requeſts, and meer importunity of obdurate ſinners?

Anſ. No, this good and eaſie God can be inflexible to any impious, or unreaſonable requeſt. And if they have been deaf to him in his time of calling, he will ſhew himſelf Juſt as well as Good, and requite them in their own kind, and be deaf to them in theirs, yea, when the extremity of their diſtreſs makes them cry to him with utmoſt

utmoſt importunity, and loudneſs. *When their fear comes*, ſays he, *as deſolation* to lay all waſte, *and deſtruction as a whirlwind* to ſweep all before it: *then*, though *they call, and ſeek me early, will I*, inſtead of relenting, *laugh, and mock at their calamity*, Prov. 1. 26, 27, &c.

Queſt. But when this Goodneſs puts ſuch difference between Objects, is it, as ſome fancy, a blind and partial benevolence, that fixes by chance, or humour, on ſome; and when once it is fixed, heaps all favours, and ſees no faults in them?

Anſ. No, by no means. God's Goodneſs is not guided, as fond Man's often is, by blind fancy, but always by higheſt diſcretion. He is infinite in Goodneſs, but yet ſo, as at the ſame time, to be equal in Juſtice, and Wiſdom too. So that he will do good to all, that have not incapacitated themſelves by their own fault, but to none againſt juſt, and wiſe reaſon.

Queſt. By this it ſeems, this good God has not more love of any Perſons, as they are his Creatures, or Favorites, than as they are endowed with certain qualifications. And that his hatred is ſtronger againſt ſin, than his Love is for any Favorite, or created Being?

Anſ. Yes, he never loves an evil work, out of favour to the workers; but, as the * *Scripture* often tells us, he hates the workers, for the ſake of their evil works. So that no Perſons muſt ever fancy they are ſuch

* Pſal. 5. 5. Prov. 21. 27. & *chap.* 28. 9.

ſuch Favorites of God, that he will tolerate them in any wickedneſs. Or that, having once fixed his Love upon them, or made Decrees in their favour, he will not ſee ſin in them, nor impute it to them, nor hate them for ſuch things, as are moſt hateful to him in others.

Queſt. If it is none of theſe things, what is it we are to underſtand by God's Goodneſs?

Anſ. His perfect delight in doing good. Which I ſhall note eſpecially in *two* things, *viz.* his forwardneſs in rewarding good Services, and his great Patience and Eaſineſs in paſſing over offences.

Queſt. Is he mindful of his Servants, and careful to reward all their good Services?

Anſ. Yes, and that he would have all Men undoubtedly, to think by him, that ſo they may be encouraged to ſerve him. For *he that cometh to God, muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of thoſe, that diligently ſeek him*, Heb. 11. 6.

Queſt. Is he alſo Patient and Merciful upon their Offences, as well as Bountiful upon their good Services?

Anſ. Yes, when they repent, and turn from them. For he proclaims himſelf *long-ſuffering, keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin*, Exod. 34. 6, 7. He ſhows wonderful Patience, in bearing with the ſins of Men; and Mercy in pardoning, when they truly repent of them.

Queſt.

Queſt. And is not this Mercy ſome incouragement to thoſe, who go on in their ſins?

Anſ. No, becauſe, as I ſaid, he will have Mercy on thoſe only, who repent of them. His *long-ſuffering* with ſinners, is only to give them time, and *lead them to repentance*, Rom. 2. 4. And his forgiving them, is only when they do repent. For even there, where he proclaims his Mercy, he declares *he will by no means clear the guilty*, Exod. 34. 7. If we are impenitent to the laſt, there is no expectation of Mercy to forgive, but of Juſtice to puniſh us.

Queſt. You ſay God ſhows this Goodneſs, in bountifully rewarding good Services. Doth he not alſo ſhow the ſame, in eſtimating what Services are good, and fit to be rewarded by him?

Anſ. Yes, as far as is conſiſtent with truth, and reaſon. He is by no means captious, or exceptious, like one that ſtudied to find faults, and make the worſt of our performances. Nor ſtiff, and rigid in ſtanding upon the extremities of things, but is ready to make all fair abatements, and allowances, which are reaſonably and juſtly pleadable in our caſe, as I ſhall have occaſion to obſerve afterwards.

Queſt. What mean you by God's *Juſtice*, or *Righteouſneſs?*

Anſ. His doing Right and Equity, both *firſt*, in giving Righteous Laws; and *ſecondly*, in paſſing Righteous Judgments according

according to them, without reſpect of Perſons.

Queſt. Is God Righteous as a Law-giver, in impoſing only juſt and Righteous Laws?

Anſ. Yes, The Gods of the *Gentiles*, indeed, which S. *Paul* * ſays were *Devils*, injoyned their Worſhippers, the moſt ſinful, foul, and cruel things. They ſerved *Bacchus* in the Idol-Feaſts called the *Bacchanals*, and other of their Deities, with Revellings, and Drunkenneſs, and Profligate Uncleanneſs: and ſo S. *Peter* ſays, whilſt they *wrought the will of the Gentiles*, together with their *abominable Idolatries*, they *walked in laſciviouſneſs, exceſs of wine, revellings*, 1 Pet. 4. 3. as the *Iſraelites*, *joyning themſelves to the Idol Baal-Peor*, *committed whoredoms*, Num. 25. 1, 2, 3. They ſerved *Moloch*, that is, *Saturn*, by moſt horrible and unnatural cruelties, dropping their own Children into the Fire through the Hands of his Statue, and ſo burning them alive to him; which the Scripture calls *making them paſs through the fire to Moloch*, as a *burnt-offering*, Lev. 18. 21. & Jer. 19. 5. But the True God is moſt utterly oppoſite to all ſuch impoſitions. He commands nothing, but what is pure, and virtuous, and for our own good and advantage; what is honorable, and perfective of our Natures; nay, what is worthy, not only of Men, but of Angels, and, when he would ſubmit to any Laws, as he did when in *Chriſt* he became Man, of God himſelf.

* 1 Cor. 10. 20.

Queſt.

Queſt. This ſhews the excellency of his Laws. But what ſay you to the equity of them? Are they not rigorous and overburdenſome, requiring more than we are able to perform?

Anſ. No, though he requires great things, yet together with that, he offers ſuch help and grace, as will render them, not only poſſible, but tolerably eaſie to us. *His commandments are not grievous*, 1 John 5. 3. *His yoke is eaſie, and his burden light*, Matth. 11. 30.

Queſt. Is God Righteous alſo as a *Judge*, that is, when he comes to Judgment, will he impartially execute his Laws, without favour, or reſpect of Perſons?

Anſ. Yes. For *in his Righteous Judgment, he will render to every Man, according to his deeds. To thoſe, who by continuance in well-doing, ſought Glory, eternal Life. But to all, that obey unrighteouſneſs*, and are impenitent ſinners, *wrath and anguiſh, and that on every one, that doth evil, without reſpect of perſons*, Rom. 2. 5. to 12.

Queſt. What will become then of all thoſe, that break his Laws?

Anſ. Unleſs they make their peace by Repentance, they muſt be condemned to that eternal Death, which his Law threatens.

Queſt. But doth not God ſometimes puniſh one Man for another's ſin, as the *Children* for the *Parents*, or the *Parents* for the *Children*; whereas the rule of Juſtice is to give every Man his own?

Anſ. No, in all his allotments, he aſſures us *the righteouſneſs of the righteous ſhall be upon him, and the wickedneſs of the wicked ſhall be upon him. Behold*, ſaith he, *all ſouls are mine, as the ſoul of the father, ſo* alſo *the ſoul of the ſon:* and one ſhall not ſuffer for another, but *the ſoul that ſinneth, it ſhall die*, Ezek. 18. 4, 19, 20. Indeed, if a Father ſhares in a Child's fault, by ſetting an evil example to it, or by being too indulgent and not ſeaſonably correcting it; then he ſhall ſuffer, as * *Eli* did: but this is not for his Child's, but for his own ſin, in as much as he concurred to it. And if a Child follow his Father's ſin, he ſhall partake in his puniſhment, as is implied in *Ezekiel*, chap. 18. 14. but that is not becauſe his Father ſinned, but becauſe he imitated it. But if we do not communicate in the ſins of other Men, we ſhall not anſwer for their guilt; for *every man ſhall bear his own burden*, Gal. 6. 5.

* 1 Sam. 2. 23, 24, 29. & *chap.* 3. 13.

Queſt. But what ſay you, when God puniſhes a wicked Parent with want, or an infirm body; doth not that tranſmit Diſeaſes, or Poverty to his innocent Poſterity? Or, when he ſcourges a ſinful Nation, with the Sword, Famine, or Peſtilence; do not thoſe involve the innocent, in common with the Criminals?

Anſ. Yes, but theſe not being directed by Almighty God upon themſelves, but ſeizing them through the neceſſity of ſecond cauſes, and courſe of things, by reaſon

ſon of their joynt Intereſts and Relations; they are not vindictive ſtrokes, nor in the way of puniſhments, but only their calamities and misfortunes. 'Tis their mixt Intereſts, not God's Juſtice, which brings theſe upon their heads.

Queſt. But when Men have forfeited by their own ſins, is not God, who would otherwiſe ſpare, oft-times moved to exact the forfeiture for the ſins of others, who will be afflicted, and are intended to be puniſhed in their misfortunes.

Anſ. Yes, and that, 'tis like, may be a reaſon, why, when God ſays in the *Second Commandment*, he *will puniſh the ſins of* Idolatrous *Fathers*, who are particularly called *haters of him, on the Children*, he limits it to the *third, and fourth generation.* For 'tis very poſſible the Parents may live ſo long to ſee their Sufferings, and ſo be puniſhed themſelves, in beholding what their unfortunate Poſterities endure for their ſakes. But ſince in this caſe, God only takes juſt forfeitures, and withholds undue favours, and forbearance, when he has great and wiſe reaſons; it is no reflexion at all on his Juſtice, or other Attributes.

Queſt. I ſee God doth not miſplace puniſhments, by puniſhing one for another's offences. But may he not ſeem to miſproportion them, when he puniſhes momentany ſins with eternal torments? Is that conſiſtent with Rules of Juſtice?

Anſ. Yes, whatever puniſhments are juſtly propoſed, may be juſtly exacted. For what a juſt, and wiſe Law-giver denounces, a juſt Judge may execute. And if Men feel the ſmart of it, they can only blame themſelves. For why would they deſerve it? The puniſhment was denounced to the ſin, before they had made themſelves guilty of it. And this denunciation was intended to reſtrain them from committing it. And if they would, by God's help they might have been reſtrained by it. So that be their ſuffering hard, or their puniſhment what it will, they have none to accuſe but themſelves, for having voluntarily called it down upon their own heads.

Queſt. But is it juſt, to propoſe and denounce ſuch heavy puniſhments?

Anſ. Yes, becauſe there is need of them, and Mankind will not be reſtrained by leſs. For ſo ſtrong is the ſinful byaſs and inclination of our Natures, ſo many and great our temptations, and ſo much the advantage of ſenſible and preſent pleaſures above future and unſeen recompences; that Men would never forego the pleaſures of their ſins on ſmaller Conſiderations. Not only the offers of all temptations, but alſo the reluctancies of our own Natures are to be out-weighed, and the great diſadvantage of remote and unſeen things is to be compenſated, by the immenſity, and eternal duration of theſe puniſhments. So that leſs than theſe, would not diſcourage any

any numbers in our circumſtances. Nay, alas, how few do theſe hinder and diſcourage, as the general wickedneſs of thoſe, who profeſs to believe them, is a lamentable and abundant evidence.

Queſt. But between ſin and puniſhment, as 'tis uſually ſaid, there ſhould be ſome proportion. Whereas ſins, that are ſoon at an end, and ſufferings, that have no end, bear no proportion.

Anſ. Since ſins and ſufferings are no material bodily things, they are not capable of being proportioned to each other by weight, or meaſure, to be weighed out equally in Scales, or meaſured by a Rule and Line, as Bodies are. Their proportion, is not a natural proportion, on account of intrinſick weight and ſize; but a moral proportion, in reſpect of ends and uſes, which is to work on Mens wills, and in their free choice to ſurmount all impediments, and out-weigh all temptations to diſobedience. So that to proportion puniſhments to ſins, is not to equalize them in intrinſick weights and meaſures, there being nothing in their Natures, which can ground ſuch compariſons: but only to proportion puniſhments to temptations, ſo as to make them out-weigh them in our choice and free-wills. And thus eternal puniſhments are proportionate to our offences; that is, they are no more, than are neceſſary to make us forego thoſe pleaſures, or advantages, which recommend

them. Nay, alas! with the greater part of Men, they cannot do this, who are ſo bewitched with ſins preſent pleaſures, that they will enjoy them, though for that they fall at laſt under theſe eternal torments, as we ſee by ſad experience.

Queſt. Since God is thus exactly juſt, and equal in all his ways, it is great Blaſphemy in any to repreſent him as tyrannical, or imperious, that doth good, or hurt, out of meer will or humour, not in regard to the qualifications of his Creatures?

Anſ. So it is. Thus, indeed, the *Indians* thought of the *Devils* they worſhipped. And thus all ſuperſtitious Perſons think of God, who ſeek to appeaſe him by vile flatteries, ſlaviſh tremblings, and forced ſubmiſſions, which are ſuited to ſuch imperious and humourſome tempers. But the true God is moſt juſt, and reaſonable in all his ways, requiring to be ſerved only in the wiſeſt things, and from willing hearts, and recompencing by a moſt unbiaſſed and exact ſentence. All is higheſt reaſon and unblemiſhed Juſtice, nothing weak humour or paſſion, which this Almighty Prince doth.

Queſt. God's punitive Juſtice then, is nothing like impotent Men's implacable revenge, who cannot be at eaſe till their anger is ſated with the ſmart of their Enemies?

Anſ. No, in no wiſe. He doth not puniſh to gratifie private paſſions, and reſentments,

ſentments. When *he afflicts*, it is *not willingly*, Lam. 3. 33. *How ſhall I give thee up?* is his compaſſionate relenting, when a ſinner is almoſt paſt Mercy, *Hoſ.* 11. 8. But it is for wiſe, and publick ends, to keep up Government, to ſecure Goodneſs, and diſcourage Offences. God's Juſtice is a wiſe Reſolution, not a weak Paſſion: and he takes pleaſure in the pains inflicted by it, as they are well and wiſely done; not at all, as angry Men are wont to do, becauſe thereby they have wrecked their ſpite on thoſe that vexed them.

Queſt. Beſides this Juſtice, in allotting future recompences; doth not God alſo ſhow himſelf juſt, in beſtowing preſent, and ſuitable events to actions?

Anſ. Yes, by him, as * *Hannah* acknowledged, *actions are weighed*, before they are accompliſhed, to beſtow events; as well as after, to make retributions, according to Reaſon and Juſtice. And this preſent Judicature, God diſcharges in the Adminiſtration of his Providence. Which muſt make all Men extreme wary what deſigns, or attempts they ingage in, never deſpairing of his Bleſſing in a good way, nor preſuming on it in an ill one, as I ſhall note afterwards.

* 1 Sam. 2. 3.

Queſt. Is God preſent in all places, to take notice of all the actions, both of good and bad Men, which he will thus juſtly reward or puniſh?

Anſ. Yes, for *whither ſhall I flee from thy preſence?* Pſal. 139. 7. *The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil, and the good,* Prov. 15. 3. *He fills heaven and earth,* ſo that *no man may hide himſelf in ſecret places, that he ſhall not ſee him,* Jer. 23. 24. And the ſenſe of this, as it will induce us every where to pray to him, becauſe, though unſeen, he is every where preſent to hear our Prayers; ſo would it be every where an effectual reſtraint, and hinder us from venturing on any evil, or misbecoming thing. For what Man would preſume to do a rude thing, in his Sovereign's preſence; or an impertinent and trifling one, before any wiſe, and grave Perſons; or a baſe and filthy one, before even a Child, or Stranger, and much more before thoſe, whoſe care 'tis to rebuke, and puniſh ſuch miſdoings? So that in all Places and Companies, we ſhould demean our ſelves with decency and modeſty, with ſerioufneſs and gravity, with circumſpection and care, purity and integrity, if we bethought our ſelves that the Great and Holy God ſtands looking on, and obſerves all our motions.

Queſt. And will it not alſo quicken Mens diligence in good things, and make them active in his Service?

Anſ. Yes, it would do ſo even with eye ſervants, who put on a great ſhew of care, and diligence in their Maſter's preſence. And beſides, it would incite Men to

to a great frequency in devout Ejaculations, and ſolemn Addreſſes to Almighty God: it being moſt unſeemly to ſtand mute and regardleſs before him, without ſuitable expreſſions of Adoration and Reverence.

Queſt. And doth this Omnipreſent God ſee even our hearts, and ſecret thoughts?

Anſ. Yes, *he is acquainted with all our ways, he underſtands our thoughts afar off, and there is not a word in our tongue, but he knows it altogether*, Pſal. 139. 2, 3, 4.

Queſt. By this it ſeems, that God knows all that is done by us in this World, and will be incorruptibly juſt in rewarding all that is good, and in puniſhing all that is bad, except repentance prevents it?

Anſ. Yes.

Queſt. What mean you by God's *Faithfulneſs*, another of his Attributes?

Anſ. I mean *two* things. *Firſt*, his inviolable performance of his promiſes. *Secondly*, his conſtant adherence to his Friends, and faithful Servants.

Queſt. God has made moſt Gracious Promiſes to his Servants, both for this Life, and the next. Will he be inviolably Faithful, and keep his Word?

Anſ. Yes, for he is not as Man that can be overſeen, and afterwards ſee his folly, and repent of it. *He is not as man, that he ſhould repent: hath he ſpoken, and ſhall he not make it good?* Num. 23. 19.

Queſt.

Queſt. But when he Promiſes, or makes Gracious Invitations, or Declarations to ſinners, as he * often doth, doth he deal plainly, and mean as he ſays?

* 1 Tim. 2. 4. 2 Pet. 3. 9. Ezek. 33. 11.

Anſ. God forbid we ſhould think otherwiſe. For he is eſſential, unmixt Truth, as incapable of all inſincere arts and double dealings, as he is of down-right falſhoods. He never ſalves his Sincerity or Faithfulneſs, by ſecret reſerves, or evaſive interpretations, being abſolutely above all need of, or temptation to ſuch unworthy Artifices. So that whatſoever we have reaſon to believe, or expect from his Word, is plain Truth, and ſhall be moſt honeſtly and punctually made good. Eſpecially, if, as in † theſe caſes, we have not only his Word, but alſo his *Oath*, which the *Apoſtle* calls *two immutable things, wherein 'tis impoſſible for God to lye*, that is, to delude our expectations, *Heb.* 6. 18. And therefore when God calls, and invites Men, to accept of his Mercy, and return to him; let not any Perſon harbour the leaſt thought, as if he were not in earneſt, or that his ſecret Will doth contradict his Word, or that when he calls for their return he doth not deſire it, or has ſet ſome impregnable Decrees as a bar againſt them, or will ſubſtract that aid which is neceſſary to them, and without which it is impoſſible for them ever to return to him. Theſe, and ſuch like, are ungodly and prophane ſuſpicions, which ſtain and blemiſh the ſpotleſs, and abſolute

† Ezek. 33. 11.

abſolute ſincerity of the moſt true God, with the faults and falſhoods of wicked and deceitful Men. And where is Mens Reaſon, or Reverence, when they queſtion whether God means as he ſays; who yet are ready to reſent it as a great affront, if, on their moſt ſerious aſſertions, any Perſon ſhall make the ſame doubt and queſtion of themſelves?

Queſt. And is he as able to make good his Word, as he is ſincere in paſſing it?

Anſ. Yes, he is the *Almighty* God, that *doth whatſoever he pleaſes, both in heaven, and earth, the ſea, and in all deep places*, Pſal. 135. 6. But as for the Explication, and Remarques upon this Attribute, I ſhall reſerve them, till it comes to be conſidered in its own place in the *Creed*.

Queſt. But when God promiſes, he oft-times drives long ere he accompliſhes.

Anſ. Though he delays, yet he never forgets, or alters. Neither multitude of affairs, nor length of time, nor after-thoughts, can either wear it out of his Memory, or change his Purpoſe. *He will ever be mindful of his covenant*, Pſal. 111. 5. He is *the faithful God, who keepeth covenant to a thouſand generations*, Deut. 7. 9. *who keepeth truth for ever*, Pſal. 146. 6. And being ſure of God's Promiſes at laſt, we may well have patience in waiting for them: as *Abraham* had, who received not the *Child* of *promiſe*, till he was very old; and his *ſeed* after him,

him, who entred not into the *promiſed land*, till above * 400 Years after God had made him the promiſe of it.

* Gen. 15. 13. Exod. 12. 41.

Queſt. But, if in hopes of his promiſed rewards, and dread of his juſt puniſhments, we ſhould take the pains to be *Holy as he is Holy*, to make him our Friend: is he never inconſtant to his Friends, and are we in no danger of loſing him?

Anſ. No.

Queſt. One thing we may be ſure of, that he will live as long as we ſhall do, to ſtand in need of him.

Anſ. Yes, for he is Eternal, *from everlaſting to everlaſting, he is God*, Pſal. 90. 2. and *when the heavens, and the earth ſhall be changed, he is the ſame, and his years ſhall have no end*, Pſal. 102. 25, 26, 27.

Queſt. And when once he loves, and takes complacence in us, will he be conſtant, and not alter his affection?

Anſ. Yes, if we continue to love, and ſerve him. For *he is the ſame yeſterday, and to day, and for evermore*, Heb. 13. 8. *with him is no variableneſs, nor* ſo much as *ſhadow of turning*, Jam. 1. 17.

Queſt. But what, if, after we are the Friends of God, we ſhould return to live in ſin?

Anſ. Then we ſhould loſe his Love. For the conſtancy of his Affection, lies not in loving and hating always the ſame Men, but in loving and hating always for the ſame reaſon. 'Tis an immovable fixedneſs, not

not upon the ſame Perſons, but upon the ſame carriage and qualities. For *if the wicked*, whom God hates, *turn from his wickedneſs; he ſhall ſurely live, and not die.* And *if the righteous*, whom God loves, *turn from his righteouſneſs, and doth according to the ways of the wicked, all his former righteouſneſs ſhall be forgotten, and in his ſins, that he hath* ſince *committed, ſhall he die*, Ezek. 18. 21, 22, 24.

Queſt. Another Attribute above-mentioned, is the *Wiſdom of God.* What mean you by God's *Wiſdom.*

Anſ. His moſt abſolute Underſtanding, which clearly ſees through all things, and knows what means are moſt proper, and what ſeaſons beſt to move in, to bring about every purpoſe,

Queſt. Is it one part of God's Wiſdom, to ſet the juſteſt rate and eſtimate on all things, not only clearly apprehending the truth, but proportionably valuing the worth of them, never magnifying a little, or undervaluing a great and weighty matter?

Anſ. Yes, to be fond of worthleſs things, is no property of the Wiſe, but of Children and ſimple Perſons; for ſuch only are apt to be taken with Toys, and Trifles. Little things may greatly delight, or diſturb little Spirits: but the Great and All-wiſe God, is moſt Wiſe and Great in all his reſentments, never ſetting more by any things, than is really in them, or valuing

ing them without, or beyond juſt cauſe. As all ill things he hates, ſo all empty ones he ſlights: proportioning all his reſentments to the true weight and worth of Objects, that they may be always wiſe, and worthy of himſelf. And therefore no Men muſt ever fancy to gain God, or fear to loſe him, by ſuch little things, and trivial indifferencies, as have little or nothing in them, but are below the reſentment of any intelligent, and prudent Man.

Queſt. Indeed, a ſmall indifferent matter, is not fit to bear a great reſentment, either on one ſide, or other. So that frequent Croſſings, or Sprinkling our ſelves with Holy Water, or Viſiting certain Shrines, or putting on ſome Religious Habits, or other empty and uncommanded Ceremonies, are no more fit to gain the good preſence, and protection of God; than the ſight of a Surplice, a Poſture, a Place, or other unforbidden Ceremony, are to forfeit and drive them from us.

Anſ. Very right; but what doth either the one, or the other, muſt always be things of weight and moment. In particular, his own Laws, which are all about the moſt important matters, contain the things he likes. So that we gain, and pleaſe him, by obedience; and offend, and loſe him, by diſobeying. And therefore no Men muſt build on uncommanded abſtinencies or ſeverities, or on any affected ſingularities; nor, in general, muſt we ever

ſeek

ſeek the favour, or ſhun the diſpleaſure of Almighty God, by arbitrary fancies and inventions of our own, but always according to what is written.

Queſt. If this All-wiſe God ſees through all things, he perfectly underſtands our Natures?

Anſ. Yes, he made our hearts, and all our faculties, and ſo thorowly underſtands them, ſeeing clearly into all their turnings and windings, tempers and inclinations, what things will incite and draw them on, and what again will effectually reſtrain, and divert them from any purpoſe.

Queſt. If he can tell how far every thing will work upon us, he can foreſee the iſſue and effect of all means and methods; and, in particular, what force Preaching, Perſuaſion, Reproof, Diſcipline, Promiſes, Threatnings, or other means of Grace, will have upon Mankind at large, and what upon all particular Men, of every genius, intereſt, and temptation?

Anſ. Yes, he knew aſſuredly that *Pharaoh would not let the Iſraelites go*, no not *for all his plagues*, Exod. 3. 19. And that *the elders of Iſrael, would hearken to the voice of Moſes*, verſe 18. And that *Tyre, and Sydon, would have repented at the ſight of Chriſt's* great, and *wonderful works*, Matth. 11. 21. And this muſt beget in us the greateſt Opinion, and Reverence for all God's Ordinances. So that no Perſons muſt ever ask, as ſome prophanely do, what good it doth to go

ſo

ſo oft to Prayers; or ſay they can benefit as much by reading at home, when they are called upon to go to Church, and hear a Sermon; or ſlightfully neglect, or undervalue any other means of God's appointing. Since God has preſcribed Prayers, and Sacraments, and Preaching, and the Authority of Spiritual Guides, and the Unity of the Church, *&c.* as perpetual, and powerful means of Faith and good Life; who ſhall dare to accuſe any of them of weakneſs, or unfitneſs; and pretend better to underſtand their efficacy, than he that underſtands all things; or put down his, and ſet up their own Wiſdom, by neglecting the old, and beating out new ways for themſelves?

Queſt. Doth God alſo ſee the beſt times, and the fitteſt ſeaſons for every purpoſe?

Anſ. Yes, ſo exactly, as never in the leaſt degree either to precipitate any buſineſs, or ſtay ſo long, till the fitteſt minute for it has over-paſſed him. And this muſt teach us never to think any Mercies too long delaied, or any Afflictions from his hand too faſt haſtned. Though in caſe of good deſired, the preſent generally ſeems beſt to Fleſh and Blood; yet in truth God's own time is always fitteſt. So that whether any things ſent by him, come too ſoon, or too ſlow, in reſpect of our wiſhes, they come juſt when they ſhould, neither too early, nor too late, in reſpect of exactneſs of ſeaſon, and uſefulneſs.

Queſt.

Queſt. If the Character of the Great God, be to be ſo Holy, and Juſt, and True, and Faithful, and Good, and Patient, *&c.* as you have ſhewed, then no Man, who conſiders what he ſays, can reaſonably pretend to love God, if he loves not theſe excellencies?

Anſ. Very right. He can only have a blind love, as one that is fond of he knows not what: Or a miſtaken love, as one that fancies God to be what he is not. But he has no intelligent, rational love of God, unleſs he love thoſe excellencies, that make up the Godhead. And if Men would worthily love theſe in God, they muſt ſeek to attain, and tranſcribe them out in themſelves too.

Queſt. At this rate no ungodly evil Man, who is an enemy of theſe Divine Tempers, can love God.

Anſ. No; they may love ſome things in God, when taken aſunder: as his Wiſdom, which will move their admiration; or his Power, whilſt he employs it for them; or his Goodneſs, ſo long as they feel its bountiful effects. But, if they ſeriouſly conſider, they cannot love the Godhead, where all theſe properties are put together. For therein is an Holineſs, that is irreconcileable to their ſins; and a Juſtice, that will be inexorable in puniſhing them; a Faithfulneſs, that will execute Threatnings, as well as fulfil Promiſes; and an Almighty Power, to be employed in Eternally tormenting

menting thoſe that offend, as well as in Eternally rewarding all that truly ſerve him. And a God of this Character, is all terrour unto them. If they conſiderately view him, they may ſoon ſee enough to make againſt them, which will keep them from being truly in love with, or deſirous of him. No Man can freely, and intelligently be in love with God, but he that is, or deſires to be like him: and accordingly in *Scripture*, the *love of God* doth ordinarily include *obedience to him.*

Queſt. If theſe excellencies make up God's Character, then when any Perſons by his Grace have once attained them, they are like God, and *partakers of the Divine Nature.*

Anſ. Yes, *his Image* conſiſts in *righteouſneſs, and true holineſs*, Eph. 4. 24. So that whoſoever are endowed with theſe, are truly good, and Godlike Perſons.

Of God's Providence.

CHAP. II.

Of God's Providence.

The Contents.

God preſerves all things he hath made. And governs them. He obſerves all our actions. And all our temptations. He diſpoſes of all good events. For he gives the fruits of the Earth. And Children. And ſucceſs in buſineſs. How this ſhould influence us in any enterprize, ſhown in ſundry particulars. He gives promotion. And the favour of Men. And life and health to enjoy all other Bleſſings. And all Spiritual Mercies. He diſpoſes alſo of ill events. As death of Friends. Unfortunate accidents, that afflict us in our Bodies, or Goods. Croſſes, and obſtructions, in our deſigns and buſineſs. Sufferings from ill Men. How God ſtints, and governs theſe. No excuſe of their unjuſt violence, to ſay

they are God's Inſtruments, and follow Providence. He ſends alſo miſcarriages of State, and Government: and preſides in the moſt tumultuary, and diſtreſſed times. In theſe, ſtill have Faith in Providence. But God muſt not be called the Author, or ſender of thoſe evils, which we bring down upon our ſelves, by our own faults, or follies.

Queſtion. YOU have already ſhowed what we are to believe of the *Being*, and *Attributes* of God. But another thing to be known of him, you ſaid, is his *Providence*. What mean you by that?

Anſ. His Preſerving, and Governing us, and all things which he hath made.

Queſt. Doth God preſerve all that he hath made?

Anſ. Yes, both in their Beings, and in their Powers and Perfections. *He preſerveth man, and beaſt*, Pſalm 36 6. *He gives to all their life, and breath, and all things: for in him we live, move, and have our being*, Acts 17. 25, 28. In particular, he preſerves Men in their Perſons, and Faculties. So that no Man loſes, either his Memory, or Underſtanding, or the uſe of any of his Senſes, or any other bodily Powers and Perfections, but only when, and ſo far as God orders, or permits. And this muſt teach all Perſons, under any apprehenſion of diminution, or loſs of their Senſes, or Intellectuals, or other Powers and Perfecti-

ons

ons, not to distract and afflict their hearts, by fearing and fancying the worst. For God that gave these Powers, is still the continuer and preserver of them, and 'tis very hard if he may not be trusted with them. Let us commit them cheerfully to him, and he will either continue the use of them, or supply the defect, and repair the detriment, that shall come by their loss, or diminution.

Quest. Must it not teach us the same, in all prospects of dangerous, or tormenting distempers too?

Ans. Yes, for he is the preserver of our health, and strength, as well as other faculties. And therefore when any Persons are entring under any bodily Pains, or Diseases, let them endeavour to bear the present burden with patience. But not make it heavier, by painful anticipations of futurities; fancying what they shall do, if their Distemper grows up to the greatest extremities; or, if some other cross Distemper, should at the same time incapacitate, and deprive them of those helps, which yield them their greatest ease and support under this; or, if their Pain and Sickness be prolonged to such a distance, as will outlast both their strength, and patience. For if God is their preserver, is not the timing, and stinting of all these in his hands? And will not he order all, in compassionate proportion to our strength and necessities, and the supplies of his

own Grace? Beſides, 'tis great folly, as well as diſtruſt, to anticipate diſtant maladies, by precipitate fears, and tormenting fancies. When all the while, God's Providence may prove as kind, as our melancholy imagination is cruel, and preſerve all that by a tender care, which we throw away in an over-haſty fear, by fancying to our ſelves very dreadful futurities, wherewith he never intends to try us.

Queſt. Doth God alſo govern all, that he hath made?

Anſ. Yes.

Queſt. Wherein is that ſhown?

Anſ. In *two* things. *Firſt*, In obſerving all actions. *Secondly*, In ordering, and diſpoſing all events.

Queſt. Doth God obſerve all our actions?

Anſ. Yes, for *the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding both the evil, and the good*, Prov. 15. 3. And this ſhould ingage us in every thing to keep Innocency, and a clear Conſcience, ſince he ſtands always looking on, to ſee how we acquit our ſelves.

Queſt. The belief of this preſent Providence, in obſerving all actions, is neceſſary to all expectation of future recompences.

Anſ. Very right. For if here God takes no cognizance, he can afterwards make no retributions, not knowing what Men have done, for him to reward, or puniſh. And therefore,

fore, as to Religion, it is all one to deny the Being of a God, as to deny his Providence; and *Epicureans*, in this reſpect, are as bad as *Atheiſts*.

Queſt. As God is moſt watchful in obſerving all our actions, is he not equally ſo, in marking all our trials and temptations?

Anſ. Yes, he not only ſees, but ſends, and ſets bounds to them, and proportions anſwerable ſuccours, to prevent their prevailing over us. *God is faithful, who will not ſuffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but will, with the temptation, make a way to eſcape* what is over-hard, *that we may be able to bear* the reſt of *it*, 1 Cor. 10. 13. And therefore whenſoever we fall under any great trials, or fear them, we muſt neither truſt to our own ſtrength without God, nor deſpair of conquering them by his help. But ſeeking to him with earneſt Prayers, and watching againſt the temptation with much heedfulneſs, have Faith in his Spirit and Providence, aſſuredly believing, that he will either put by and break its ſtrength, or increaſe ours.

Queſt. And doth God order, and diſpoſe of all events?

Anſ. Yes, even thoſe that befal the meaneſt Creatures. For *not a Sparrow falls to the ground, without our heavenly Father*, Matth. 10. 29. But eſpecially thoſe, which befal Men, for whom his care extends to things ſo minute, that *even the hairs of their*

head are all numbred, verſe 30. He ſends all the good, and evil, that happens to us in this World; ſo that we meet him at all turns, and muſt diſcern his Hand in all that happens.

Queſt. Doth God order for us all the good events we meet with?

Anſ. Yes, both all thoſe, which come upon us by accident; for though they are accidents, and unexpected things to us, they are Providences and deſigned favours in God; and likewiſe all which come by our own care and pains, ſince when we labour and contrive for any thing, 'tis his Bleſſing that gives ſucceſs to us.

Queſt. What muſt this teach us?

Anſ. Both to be thankful to him for every good thing, whilſt we have them; and to live upon Providence, when we want them; conſidering, that God has the Gift and Donation of all thoſe things, which we need, and that he has taken the care of us, and will beſtow them when they are fit for us. This dependance upon God, or living upon Providence, is the conſtant Character of Religious Men in the *Scriptures*. *Abraham*, and *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, and *Joſeph*, and all other Holy Men in all times, always attributed all the good they injoyed to God, and truſted in him for the ſupply of all they wanted. And this Life of Faith, or confidence in him, is the great mark of their Religion. *The juſt ſhall live* or be ſuſtained *by Faith*, that is, in God's care,

care, and kindneſs, and eſpecial promiſes, *Habak.* 2. 4.

Queſt. Is it God, who gives us all the *Fruits of the Earth*, and *plentiful Seaſons?*

Anſ. Yes, *he viſiteth the earth, and watereth it, he maketh it ſoft with ſhowres, and bleſſeth the ſpringing thereof. He crowns the year with his goodneſs, and his paths drop fatneſs*, Pſalm 65. 9, 10, 11. *He cauſeth the graſs to grow for the cattel, and herb for the ſervice of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oyl to make him a cheerful countenance, and bread to ſtrengthen man's heart*, Pſalm 104. 14, 15.

Queſt. What muſt this teach us?

Anſ. Before the Fruits of the Earth are grown up, it muſt make us Till the Ground, and Plow in hope that God will give a Bleſſing to it. Nay, in a hard Seed-time, or diſcouraging Seaſon, or under any ſeemingly approaching ſcarcity, it muſt quiet the Husbandman's heart, and the hearts of all others, with truſt in God's Providence, who can open his Hand, and puſh on what he had kept back when he pleaſes, and proportion his ſupplies to our neceſſities. *The eyes of all*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, muſt *wait upon God, for he gives them their meat*, and that *in due ſeaſon. He opens his hand, and ſatisfieth the deſire of every living thing*, Pſalm 145. 15, 16.

Queſt. And what muſt it teach us, after we have reaped them?

Anſ.

Anſ. With cheerful, and thankful hearts, to give, not only the Prieſt his juſt due, but likewiſe the Poor, who is another of God's receivers, his portion. Which is moſt neceſſary, not only to expreſs our thanks to God, who hath ſent us all theſe Fruits, but alſo to increaſe our own ſtore, and bring down God's Bleſſing upon our Fields, which will multiply the Seed ſown, and bring in more. This, *Solomon* ſays, will be the effect of giving to the *Poor. There is that ſcattereth, and yet increaſeth: the liberal ſoul ſhall be made fat, and he that watereth, ſhall be watered alſo himſelf*, Prov. 11. 24, 25. And the ſame increaſe we may hope to reap from paying the *Prieſt* all his juſt dues alſo. *Honour the Lord with thy ſubſtance, and with the firſt-fruits of all thine increaſe: ſo ſhall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy preſſes ſhall burſt out with new wine:* that is, God will give thee for this, both a plentiful Harveſt, and a rich Vintage, *Prov.* 3. 9, 10.

Queſt. Indeed, if God's Bleſſing maketh Rich, 'tis obvious to infer, that being juſt to the Prieſt, and charitable to the Poor, who are both under God's eſpecial care, is like to gain him, and ſo is the trueſt way of thriving?

Anſ. Yes, he that thinks Providence gives the increaſe, will readily believe it; and he who tries, if he is not wanting to it on other accounts, will experimentally find, that this is not the way to diminiſh,

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but to increaſe an eſtate. This, *Azariah the chief Prieſt* told *King Hezekiah*, was the cauſe of that ſurpluſage of plenty, which God beſtowed upon the *Jews*, 2 Chron. 31. The King had *commanded all the people*, to pay juſtly all their Tythes and Offerings, which had been fraudulently withheld, *to the Prieſts and Levites*, for their *incouragement in the Law of the Lord:* beginning the Practice with his own example, paying all his dues to the Church, *verſe* 3, 4. *And as ſoon as this commandment came abroad, the people brought* in all their Tythes and Oblations, as they fell due *in abundance, the firſt-fruits of corn, of wine, and oyl, and hony, and all the increaſe of the field, the tythe of oxen, and ſheep, and the tythe of holy things which were conſecrated unto the Lord their God, the tythe of all things brought they in abundantly, and laid them heaps by heaps*, verſe 5, 6. *And when Hezekiah, and the Princes, came and ſaw the heaps*, and thereby underſtood the vaſt increaſe the People had received, which yielded ſuch abundance of Dues to the Prieſts, *he bleſſed God* for it, *and asked Azariah* concerning the cauſe of this mighty ſurpluſage, *verſe* 8, 9. *And Azariah the chief Prieſt anſwered him, and ſaid, Since the people began to bring the offerings into the houſe of the Lord, we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty: for the Lord hath bleſſed his people, and that which is left, is this great ſtore.* That is, ſince out of their Fruits, which are the Gift of God, they have faithfully paid their Dues to God,

he

he has ſo increaſed their ſtore, that our ſhare comes to ſo much we know not how to diſpoſe of it, but have left all theſe heaps thou ſeeſt, after we, and our Families, have eaten, and are ſatisfied, *verſe* 10.

Queſt. I ſee it teaches us, both in Duty, and prudence, to give willingly, and cheerfully, the Poors Dole, and the Prieſts Dues: but doth it not alſo teach us how to injoy, and ſpend the reſt, which remains to our ſelves?

Anſ. Yes, for coming from the free Bounty of God, we muſt injoy it with a thankful and cheerful heart, not with murmuring, envy, or diſcontent, like Men that are proner to ſpy faults than to own favours, and are never pleaſed. Beſides, ſince it is God's gift, we muſt take care that God be honoured by it, and never diſhonour him, or abuſe our ſelves, by ſpending it upon vice, or vanity, but own his Gift in a temperate, and ſober uſe of it. Yea, I add, in a charitable uſe too. For theſe Fruits God gives to us, not as Proprietors, but * *Stewards*, to diſtribute abroad to the neceſſities of others, after we have ſerved our ſelves. So that not only temperance and thankful hearts, but Alms and Charity alſo, are neceſſary to hallow our enjoyments. *Give alms of ſuch things, as you have, and behold all things are clean unto you,* Luke 11.41.

* 1 Pet 4. 10.

Queſt.

Queſt. Is it God alſo that gives us *Children?*

Anſ. Yes, *Children, or the Fruit of the Womb, are a reward, and heritage, that cometh of the Lord:* that is, he diſpoſes of them to whom he pleaſes, as a Parent doth of his Eſtate, *Pſalm* 127. 3. And therefore, as we muſt reſt ſatisfied whilſt we have none, becauſe it is God that withholds them: ſo muſt we truſt in God when we have many of them, believing, that, ſince, as our Saviour ſaith, * *the life is more than meat*, he that ſent Mouths will ſend Meat; and that, as they were at firſt his Gift, they will be ſtill his Care; and that he, who provides for the *Ravens*, will much more provide for them, *Luke* 12. 24. * Matth. 6. 25.

Queſt. Is it the ſame Providence of God, that makes us *thrive in our Trades*, and gives a *proſperous ſucceſs* to us in any *buſineſs?*

Anſ. Yes, *the horſe is provided againſt the day of Battel, but ſafety is of the Lord*, Prov. 21. 31. Though *a man's heart deviſeth his way*, that is, Men hammer out a project, yet *the Lord directeth his ſteps*, that is, God determines the event, and orders ſuch an iſſue, as, perhaps, he never intended, *Prov.* 16. 9. Men may contrive, and purſue methods; but God ſtill muſt give events. *The way of man is not in himſelf, it is not in man that walks to direct his own ſteps*, that is, to fix and determine them on any final iſſues, *Jer.* 10. 23.

Queſt.

Queſt. Muſt not this teach us, whenſoever we begin any buſineſs, or ſet upon any attempts, to recommend them firſt to God, by Prayers or Pious Ejaculations, and to place our chiefeſt confidence in his Bleſſing?

Anſ. Yes, *In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he ſhall direct thy paths*, Prov. 3. 6. *commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts ſhall be eſtabliſhed*, that is, ſhall take effect, *Prov.* 16. 3. And I think there is little queſtion to be made, but that Men miſcarry far oftner, than otherwiſe they would, in their deſigns and buſineſs, becauſe they truſt too much to their own care, and skill, and human aids, and ſeek no more to God, to ingage the furtherance of his good Providence.

Queſt. Muſt Men ſeek thus to God, even in things wherein they are beſt skilled themſelves, and when they are confident they take the ſureſt methods?

Anſ. Yes, for the ſureſt means without a good Providence, will not ſecure the iſſues. *The race*, as *Solomon* obſerved, *is not always to the ſwift, nor the battel to the ſtrong, nor favour to men of skill*, Eccleſ. 9. 11. So that when Men are in the wiſeſt courſes, or moſt probable preparations, they have need ſtill to look up to God, who muſt conſummate all by his aſſiſtance. *Truſt in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own underſtanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he ſhall direct thy paths*, Prov. 3. 5, 6.

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There is very much indeed, lies in wiſe management, *every purpoſe*, as *Solomon* ſays, being *eſtabliſhed by counſel*, Prov. 20. 18. But when wiſe managers ſhew a Religious dependance, and truſt in God too, that is the way to aſſure the event. *He that handles a matter wiſely, ſhall find good*: but if, together with that, *he truſt in the Lord* more than his own skill, *happy is he*, Prov. 16. 20.

Queſt. But if the event depends thus on God, till we ſee what way he will take, we cannot be ſure of it. And muſt not this teach us not to be too poſitive, but modeſt in theſe expectations, and promiſe the deſired iſſue to our ſelves, ſtill with this reſerve, if God ſees it fit for us?

Anſ. Yes, *for man's goings are of the Lord, how can a man then underſtand his own way?* that is, foreſee the event of it, ſince God oftentimes over-rules their motions, to ends far diſtant from their thoughts, *Prov.* 20. 24. And this, as it will keep us from being too confident of gaining any good things, will preſerve us alſo from deſponding under the apparent danger of any bad ones: ſince, when they are neareſt to us, God can turn them off by a thouſand ways, nay, make them ſerve as means to accompliſh our advantage.

Queſt. Since he is to give the end of all actions, may we not ſafely truſt him with that, and do what we ought to do, though thereby we foreſee danger of diſpleaſing others, or of prejudicing our worldly intereſts?

Anſ.

Anſ. Yes, we muſt be careful to do our duty, that is our part: and truſt him with events, for that is his. God oft ſurprizes us with iſſues; ſo that a Man cannot foreſee the end of his own way, which frequently will be better than he expects it. And this in the moſt perillous and threatning times, ſhould teach all Men to be more thoughtful, and concerned for the exact doing of their duty, than for eſcaping the croſs, which may ſeem to accompany it. For if then they can be ſo happy, as to conſider wiſely, and perform what they ought, they may leave Providence to give it a good effect, and take care they be no loſers by it.

Queſt. And ſince we can bring no buſineſs about, but by God's Bleſſing, muſt not this teach us never to ſeek to gain our end by any ſin?

Anſ. Moſt certainly, for that is the way to offend God, and move him, not to bleſs, but to blaſt our deſign. If we hope to ſuccede, as I have obſerved from *Solomon*, *we muſt commit our work to him*, and that can be only in well-doing: *we muſt acknowledge him*, and then not ſeek help from any ſin, ſince that were to renounce him. *Let thine eyes look ſtraight on*, ſo as to aim only at juſt ends, *and ponder the way of thy feet*, ſo as to take none but lawful methods, *and* then *thy paths ſhall be eſtabliſhed*, Prov. 4. 25, 26.

Queſt.

Queſt. And the ſame you will ſay of driving Trade, by falſe Weights and Meaſures, or by belying Wares, or ſetting exacting Prices, or otherwiſe uſing indirect Arts, or deceitful Speeches and Pretences?

Anſ. Yes, for all theſe in God's Eyes are an abomination, and ſo can never bring down, but may well ſtop a Bleſſing. Which every Man ought ſeriouſly to conſider, who believes a good Trade to be of God's ſending.

Queſt. If we are to have all the good effect of our pains, and projects, from God, we muſt have it at his time. And ought we not to think his the beſt Seaſon?

Anſ. Yes, he ſees what opportunities are fitteſt, and brings about a good event with moſt advantage, to thoſe that wait his time, and truſt him with it: as he did to *Joſeph*, the *rule over his brethren*; and to *David*, the *poſſeſſion of the kingdom. I the Lord will haſten it in its time*, Iſaiah 60. 22. *He will ariſe, and have mercy upon Sion, when the time of favour, yea, the ſet time is come*, Pſal. 102. 13. And this muſt teach all Men, in any hopes, or purſuits of good, never to be too haſty, or, by any indirect or evil ways of their own, to take the matter out of God's hand, but patiently to wait his time, and ſtay till he ſees fit to fulfil their expectation. *He that believeth, will not make haſte*, Iſaiah 28. 16.

Queſt. But when Providence is ſlow in bringing longing deſires to paſs, and lays fair opportunities in their way, may not Men turn aſide a little to anticipate, and prevent God's orderings?

Anſ. No, for that is to take the matter out of God's hand, where it muſt needs ſucceed to beſt advantage, and thereby endanger, both the loſs of God's favour, and all the concurrent Mercies depending on thoſe methods, whereby in his own time he has determined to promote, or ſave us. *Joſeph*, when the *keeper of the priſon* had * put the *keys* into his hand, might very probably have made his own eſcape. But had he impatiently catched at that opportunity before God's time, he had not been preferred, as he was when God delivered him. And his Father *Jacob*, when he would haſtily † ſnatch the *promiſed birth-right* by a falſhood, underwent therefore great hazards, and a long baniſhment; all which would probably have been ſaved, had he patiently ſtayed, till God's Wiſdom had found a way for it.

* Gen. 39. 22, 23.

† Gen. 27.

Queſt. If God muſt thus give ſucceſs to all means, then no deſign can take effect, though never ſo wiſely laid, or powerfully backed, if it croſſes the deſigns of his Providence?

Anſ. No; neither ſuch, as are managed by the deepeſt Counſel and Advice; for *there is no wiſdom, nor counſel, nor underſtanding againſt the Lord*, Prov. 21. 30. Nor ſuch, as

as are puſhed on by the moſt violent, and * powerful force. For though *the horſe is provided againſt the day of battel, yet ſafety is from the Lord*, verſe 31. And therefore let Men always take care wiſely to fix their hearts, and hopes on ſuch things, as they have reaſon to believe God will ſupport, and then be confident, that, though to try their Faith and Patience, he may ſuffer them to be endangered, or diſtreſſed for a while, as he ſuffered *Joſeph* to be impriſoned, and *David* to be perſecuted, and the *Church* in the * *Revelations* to be obſcured and *driven* from places of habitation and reſort *into the wilderneſs*, yet at laſt he will viſibly ſtand by the things he doth eſpouſe, and make them prove too hard for the moſt Politick, or Puiſſant adverſaries.

* Pſal. 66. 3, 7.

† Chap. 12.

Queſt. If no work can take effect without God, then no work of our Enemies. And may not this comfort us to think, that whilſt he deſigns well for us, no contrivance, or power, of Men, or Devils, can harm us?

Anſ. It may moſt juſtly. As it did holy *David*, who when his Enemies *deviſed to take away his life*, made this his ſupport, that whatever they contrived, *his times were in God's hand*, Pſal. 31. 13, 15. *This*, ſays *Iſaiah*, *is the heritage of God's ſervants, no weapon ſhall proſper, that is formed againſt them; and every tongue, that ſhall implead them in judgment, ſhall they condemn*, Iſaiah 54. 17. So that no craft, or cruelty can deſtroy, whilſt God is minded to preſerve us.

Queſt. I perceive we muſt acknowledge God, the Donor of ſucceſs to every work, or deſign: but is it he alſo that gives promotion?

Anſ. Yes, *both riches, and honour come of him, in his hand is power and might, and in him it is to make great, and to give ſtrength to all,* 1 Chron. 29. 12. *Promotion cometh neither from the eaſt, nor from the weſt, nor from the ſouth. But God is the judge; he puts down one, and ſetteth up another*, Pſal. 75. 6, 7. And therefore no Man muſt ever ſeek to exalt himſelf by any ſinful, or indirect means, as vile flatteries, and ſinful compliances, and ſerving wicked turns, and undermining others, and the like. For if promotion is not wholly in the will of ſinful Man, but depends on the over-ruling Providence of God, theſe certainly are not the way to make an intereſt.

Queſt. When a Man is a riſing then, I perceive it is in no wiſe ſafe to ſtep aſide, or take up the leaſt ſin, though it ſeem to lie in the ready way to make his fortune?

Anſ. No; when all is done, prudent integrity is the beſt counſeller, and the ſureſt way to maintain a preſent ſtation, or advance higher, or to have a good ſupport, and ſuch a kind Providence, as will make amends, when thereby we miſs of either. *He that walketh uprightly, walketh ſurely*, ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 10. 9. *The integrity of the upright*, ſays he again, *ſhall guide, and direct them*: yea, in any dangers, *it ſhall deliver them.*

them. But if by wicked craft, and ungodly policy, Men ſhall chuſe to do ill to ſerve a turn, *the perverſeneſs of* ſuch *tranſgreſſors ſhall deſtroy them:* And inſtead of being ſaved, or advanced, *they ſhall fall by their own wickedneſs, and be taken in their own naughtineſs,* Prov. 11. 3, 5, 6. Whilſt *righteouſneſs keeps him that is upright in the way,* by God's uſual and juſt Judgment, *wickedneſs overthrows the ſinner,* Prov. 13. 6.

Queſt. Since God gives promotion, is not this enough to make all Men contented and ſatisfied, when they reſt in a lower ſtate, and ſee others exalted?

Anſ. Yes, becauſe their lower ſtate is what God allots, who can eaſily exalt them, if he ſees it convenient for his own Glory, and their good, againſt which, no wiſe Perſon would deſire it. And it is not only the higheſt duty, but the trueſt intereſt of all Men, to let God chuſe for them every eſtate; becauſe he alone knows perfectly all the troubles and temptations of it, and their fitneſs for it. He underſtands us all far better, than the wiſeſt of us underſtand our ſelves: and therefore beſt ſees what condition is proper for us. Beſides, if he give us leſs here, the day of Judgment will make up all the ſeemingly unequal diſtributions of this World, ſo that we may hope for the more hereafter. *Lazarus*, though a very good Man, was *extreme poor*, and *full of ſores*, and in this World *received his evil things.* But his

more than ordinary wants in *this preſent life*, were abundantly made up by the ſurpluſage of bliſs in *Abraham's boſom*, Luke 16. 20, 21, 22, 25. And when Perſons of equal goodneſs, have not equal encouragements of Providence allotted them in this life, they have the more in reverſion, and greater things to expect afterwards.

Queſt. Doth God alſo give all that favour, we find in the Eyes of Men?

Anſ. Yes, *the Lord gave Joſeph favour in the ſight of the keeper of the priſon*, Gen. 39. 21. and *gave him favour in the ſight of Pharaoh*, Act. 7. 10. and *Iſrael favour in the ſight of the Egyptians*, Exod. 3. 21. and *Daniel favour, and tender love, with the prince of the Eunuchs*, Dan. 1. 9. The skill, and goodneſs, of ſome excellent and uſeful Perſons, may deſerve to be favoured: but *favour is not always to men of skill*, but only where God bends the hearts of Men, and beſtows it, *Eccleſ.* 9. 11. All the favour, which any Men ſhew us, is our good God's, who conveys it to us through their hearts, and hands.

Queſt. When we come to them for any favours, is it God that helps us to addreſs with moving Speech, and with clear and perſuaſive Reaſon, and Arguments?

Anſ. Yes, and inclines them too to hearken to it, and return us ſoft, and gracious Anſwers. As *the preparation of the heart*, in him that pleads and craves favour; ſo *the anſwer of the tongue*, in him that grants it,

it, *is from the Lord*, Prov. 16. 1. And therefore in all our ſuits, and dependances on Men, we muſt firſt ſeek to, and place our truſt in God. For if our ſuit pleaſe him, he will help us ſo to deliver our requeſts, and to prefer them at ſuch times, that they ſhall be ſure to receive, and be pleaſed with them too.

Queſt. And will they be ſure to do this, though at the ſame time they are ſolicited, and inclined very different ways, and have in their Eye and Intention many other projects, which are ready to oppoſe, and juſtle out ours?

Anſ. Yes, for when *there are many devices in a man's heart, nevertheleſs the counſel of the Lord*, or that device among them all which God eſpouſes, *it ſhall ſtand*, Prov. 19. 21. And therefore in any matters, which God loves and eſpouſes, let no good Men deſpond, becauſe of the inſtability and unſettledneſs, or becauſe of the number, intereſt, or oppoſiteneſs of other Counſels, whereby he is exerciſed, who has the diſpoſal of them. For God can quickly alter his meaſures, and turn his deliberations as he will, and fix the determination where he pleaſes.

Queſt. If we cannot have the favour of Men, but by the gift and bleſſing of God, muſt not this teach us never to commit any ſin to pleaſe Men, nor do the leaſt offence to him, in hopes thereby to ingratiate our ſelves with them, either to gain their favour, or to keep and retain it?

Anſ. Yes, it muſt teach us this. For if we fall out with God, he can quickly ſpoil our credit, and favour with Men too. But if we keep favour with him, by holding punctually to well-doing, he rules the hearts of all Men, and can either preſerve us in their favour, or protect us from their diſpleaſure. Nay, in all likelihood, he both can, and will, not only continue to us our old Friends, who muſt needs ſecretly approve our upright dealings, though we comply not with their own private ends; but alſo add more. For *when a man's ways pleaſe the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him*, Prov. 16. 7. So that Men muſt never neglect their own duty, or commit any ſin, to pleaſe great Perſons, or to keep peace with their violent, or malicious Neighbours. Let them adhere ſtrictly to their duty, which will ſecure the favour of God: and then his Providence will add the favour of Men, where he ſees that will do them good, or make their lives competently happy, and comfortable without it; or however, make good the want thereof to them abundantly in another World.

Queſt. I ſee 'tis Providence that gives us Children, to recompence our cares, and perpetuate our memories, and ſucceſs to our honeſt labours, and wealth, and honour, and favour: and is it not the ſame God ſtill, that gives us both life, and health to injoy them?

Anſ.

Anſ. Yes, for *in him we live, move, and have our being*, Act. 17. 28. When *he hides his face, all things are troubled: he takes away their breath, and they die, and are turned to their duſt*, Pſal. 104. 29. And for this we are not only thankfully to own his gift, but ſince we every minute live upon him, we ought by all means continually to live to him, and not lay out our health, and ſtrength, in vice, or vanities. For whenſoever theſe are ſhamefully miſ-ſpent, 'tis but for him to hold his hand, and we are in ſickneſs, pains, or death the next moment.

Queſt. If God is thus the giver, and the reſtorer of health, then, when Men are in ſickneſs, fervent Prayer is one ſtep to a cure. And when they ſend for a Phyſician, and follow his preſcriptions, they muſt look up to God as well as to him, and truſt he will work their recovery, by what the other orders for them.

Anſ. Yes, they muſt depend on him as the chief Phyſician. Men muſt not preſume God will work without means, which were to put him to work Miracles. But when they have uſed the likelieſt means, and taken the beſt ways they can, they muſt perfect all by Prayer and dependance on God, hoping he will give a Bleſſing to them. The Prayer of the Miniſter, as well as the preſcription of the Doctor, is a proper means to recover an infirm, or ſick Perſon. And accordingly S. *James* directs

rects any that are *ſick*, to *ſend for the elders of the Church, that they may pray over him*, Jam. 5. 14.

Queſt. From what you have ſaid, 'tis plain that God's Providence allots for us all the good things of this life. And is it not he too, that orders for us all Spiritual advantages; not only virtuous endowments, but alſo all outward means and opportunities of Virtue and Religion, which muſt fit us for a better life?

Anſ. Yes, moſt certainly. And therefore, as we muſt thankfully injoy, and make the beſt uſe we can of thoſe means, and opportunities God has given us: ſo, when they are meaner, ſince they are of his ordering, we muſt keep his way, and do no evil thing, particularly not break the Order and Unity of the Church, to find better.

Queſt. I ſee God is the giver of every good thing, and therefore we muſt own all that comes well to us any way, as his Gift and Bleſſing.

Anſ. Yes, both when we receive, and as often as we ſpeak of them. We ſhould not forget to thank God on all good occurrences, though coming to us from ſeeming accidents, or the hands of our Neighbours. Nor ſhould we forget to do the ſame, on all relations of them unto others; but in ſpeaking of any Bleſſings, or comfortable Enjoyments, think a ſerious *God be thanked*, moſt ſeemly and ſavory in all Pious Perſons mouths.

Queſt.

Queſt. But as God's Providence orders for us all good events, doth he likewiſe order for us all evil ones?

Anſ. Yes, whether thoſe that come upon us by accident, or by ill Men, that are either private to our ſelves, or publick and common to the whole Church or Nation. *Out of the mouth of the moſt high, proceedeth not evil, and good?* Lam. 3. 38. And *ſhall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?* Amos 3. 6.

Queſt. When our Friends die, is that through Providence, and doth God take them?

Anſ. Yes, albeit they are ſnatched away untimely by evil accidents, which, though caſual to us, are foreſeen and ordered by him. In his hand are life and death, ſo that whenſoever our Friends die, he calls them. And this muſt teach us patiently to bear their loſs; yea, moreover, to truſt him to make up the want of them ſome other ways, though their life ſeemed not only very uſeful, but almoſt neceſſary to us. For let our Friends be as uſeful, as they will; they are only his inſtruments. It is he that gives them, both the inclination, the skill, and the opportunity to help us. And he, that ſupplied us by them, can ſupply us without them: he can, when he pleaſes, raiſe up others, or put us into a way and capacity to provide for our ſelves. So that no Perſon can be Friendleſs, but is rich in Friends, who has a Friend

Friend of God, and is under a good Providence. And one of the ſureſt ways to make him a Friend, when others are gone, is to truſt him.

Queſt. This is ſatisfactory, as to the loſs, but oh! the misfortune of the time. For they were taken away juſt then, when we promiſed our ſelves moſt pleaſure in them, which made us moſt deſirous to keep, and loth to part with them.

Anſ. If we believe, that a moſt Wiſe God took them, in all modeſty we ſhould believe too, that he knows what are the moſt convenient, and fitteſt Seaſons, for Friends to part in.

Queſt. I ſee when God takes a Friend from us, we muſt ſubmit, and truſt him. But doth it not ſhew he is angry with us, when he tears a Friend from our ſides?

Anſ. No, perhaps, it is only becauſe he is pleaſed with them, and would take them to himſelf. And we ought not to judge he hates us, for loving thoſe that we love.

Queſt. When we ſuffer by miſchances, or ill accidents, in our Bodies, or Goods, are thoſe ſufferings from Providence?

Anſ. Yes, it not only foreſees, but times the evils to be ready when we are in the way, and orders, and directs them for us. If *the lot* fall againſt us, when 'tis *caſt into the lap, the whole diſpoſal thereof is from the Lord*, Prov. 16. 33. If a Man is accidentally

tally maimed, or *murdered*, 'tis chance-medly and accident in him that hurt, or slew him, but design in God, who, says the *Scripture* in this case, *delivered the man into his hand*, Exod. 21. 13. And this must teach Men in all unlucky chances, and unfortunate accidents, not to vent themselves in wrath and foolish passion, against the immediate occasions, whether inanimate things that could not, or undesigning Persons that did not intend any ill to them: but to look up to God, with humility and patience under what they feel, and thankfulness for all they have escaped. For in him only the evil accident was design; and against him, who justly can, or dare complain?

Quest. This is well as to unfortunate accidents. But what if our hopes or happiness are damped, or our maladies made worse, yea, perhaps, irremediable, by gross heedlessness, or unkindness and hard-heartedness, or other exasperating faultiness or over-sights, of our seeming Friends, or Servants, or others that are concerned about us? 'Tis easier to bear, when we are made miserable by God's Providence; but it grates hard when their faultiness makes us so, of whom we might well expect better things?

Ans. Though they are the actors, God's Providence is the orderer of these misfortunes: which therefore are to be undergone with the same patience. For as a good

good Wife or Husband, ſo a wiſe and good Servant, or Friend, is God's gift. And when God chaſtiſes and ſmites us, by ſuch as are exaſperatingly unkind, or miſchievouſly careleſs, we muſt own his Juſtice in their neglects, and ſubmit to them as we do to a Diſeaſe, that is, reckon them among that burden, or ſhare of ſuffering, which God has allotted for us in this life.

Queſt. Is it Providence ſtill, that ſends us any croſſes, and obſtructions, in our deſigns and buſineſs?

Anſ. Yes, thoſe croſſes come from him, to exerciſe our Faith, where he approves of our purſuits; or to diſappoint and put us by, where he diſlikes them. And this muſt teach us patience, as often as we meet with them.

Queſt. 'Tis enough, indeed, to ſtop all complaints, that any thing is of his doing. But can you ſay moreover, that theſe croſſes are for ends both of Grace, and Wiſdom?

Anſ. Yes, to all thoſe that love him. If they come to defeat their projects, they ſhall ſee at laſt that is in favour to them: or if only to backen them, that is, but to reſpite them for a more advantageous iſſue at a fitter ſeaſon; nay, perhaps, theſe ſeeming backners, will at laſt appear the trueſt promoters to help them on. If Men will have patience till all is done, their croſſes and miſadventures will appear moſt orderly, proper, and beautiful in their time,

when

when they have ſeen on to the end of the chain, and viewed the whole frame and dependance of God's ordering. And therefore upon any croſs occurrences, Men muſt not be haſty in judging, to diſcourage and diſcontent their hearts: but wait God's time with Patience, Hope, and implicite Faith, till the end of things diſcovers his moſt Wiſe, and Gracious Purpoſe.

Queſt. But what if in the height of our hopes, and probabilities, ſome croſs accident ſtarts up, that is like to break all our meaſures?

Anſ. If God ſees good to make our hopes take place, he can make our croſſes carry on our deſires to advantage. For 'tis his Prerogative to *bring light out of darkneſs*; to make uſe of *weak things to worſt the ſtrong, and of fooliſh things to confound the wiſe*, 1 Cor. 1. 27. And he has declared, that *all things ſhall work together for good, to thoſe that love God*, Rom. 8. 28. But then they muſt commit their caſe to his conduct, and truſt him with it.

Queſt. But the evil accident happens at that very time, which of all others ſeems moſt unſeaſonable, and fit to pull down all they have been ſo long a building up?

Anſ. Though it doth, to God the eaſineſs of accompliſhing his Gracious Purpoſes, is ſtill the ſame. It only gets him the greater Glory, in making the croſſeſt events ſerve ſuch turns, as are beſide all expectation,

expectation, and he chuſes to work by ſuch improbable means, to ſhew his overruling Wiſdom. What, in appearance, could be worſe timed, than the diſſenſion of *Paul* and *Barnabas*, two chief Miniſters, in an Infant-Church. Yet this God turned to the furtherance of the Goſpel, by dividing them, like two great Streams, for the watering of more Countries; *Paul going through Syria and Cilicia*, and *Barnabas to Cyprus*, Act. 15. 39, 40, 41. And therefore we muſt never be immoderately troubled, or dejected, at private, or publick miſchances, falling out moſt unſeaſonably to croſs our hopes, either for our particular Intereſts, or for God's Holy Church. For when God is ingaged for us, he over-rules, as the greateſt evils, ſo the croſſeſt ſeaſons too to ſerve his own purpoſe.

Queſt. Sickneſs, loſs of friends, and croſſes and miſchances, that could not be foreſeen, I ſee plainly are the Hand of God. But when we ſuffer from ill Men, are thoſe evils alſo of God's ſending?

Anſ. Yes, for *the wicked are God's ſword*, Pſal. 17. 13. He over-rules the moſt troubleſom, and ungodly Men, to ſerve his own turn: *the Lord hath made*, or diſpoſed *all things for himſelf; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil*, that is, to vent themſelves there, where he ſees fit to ſend evil, *Prov.* 16. 4. They are his inſtruments, whereby he either exerciſes our patience, or corrects our diſobedience.

Queſt.

Queſt. If 'tis God that afflicts us by them, and they are but as a Rod or Inſtrument in his Hand; when they deſign to vex, and hurt us, he can put by their deſign?

Anſ. Yes, and often doth; as he put by *Abimelech* from *committing wickedneſs*, by a *terrifying dream*, Gen. 20. 3, 6. and *Pharaoh*, by *ſending great plagues upon him*, Gen. 12. 17. His Providence can at any time throw in their way a diſcouraging reaſon, a diverting fear, an inward relenting, or expoſe ſome other object to their hurtful paſſion, and divert it from him it fixed firſt upon. Even *the heart of kings*, ſays *Solomon*, who, having no Superiours here, ſeem moſt of all left to their own wills, *are in God's hand* to derive into any channels or courſes, *as the rivers of water* are in the Husbandman's, to bring them over what part of his Ground he pleaſes, *Prov.* 21. 1. whereof we have abundant inſtances, both in Holy *Scripture*, and *Experience*.

Queſt. And when they are fully fixed to do us hurt, yet ſince they are under his conduct and direction, let them deſire, and endeavour it as much as they will, they cannot do us any hurt before his time?

Anſ. That is very right. And this was plain in the *wicked Jews*, who, though they ſought with all their might to *kill Chriſt*: yet either he *ſecretly withdrew himſelf*, at the very point of time, when *they thought to lay*

hands on him, Luke 4. 29, 30. or the *officers* hearts relented, who were *ſent to apprehend him*, John 7. 32, 44, 45, 46. or they were providentially ſtruck with a ſtartling *fear*, that *the People*, who *held him for a Prophet*, would riſe upon them, *Matth.* 21. 46. Some thing, or other, ſtood always ready to put them by, *becauſe his hour was not yet come*, John 7. 30. But when God's own time drew on, his Providence, which was a Wall of Braſs about him before, laid him open to their ſpite, and then they wrought their wills upon him: *this is your hour, and the power of darkneſs*, Luke 22. 53. And ſo it was alſo in *Job's caſe*. Whilſt *God ſet an hedge about him*, no Enemy could annoy him: and till God had ſaid, *all he has is in thine hand*, Satan himſelf could not bring his miſchievous inſtruments, the *Sabaans*, and *Chaldæans* upon him, *Job* 1. 10, 12, 15, 17.

Queſt. And when that time is come, can they exceed his bounds, or afflict further than he has allowed them?

Anſ. No; for though the *Jews*, to increaſe *Chriſt*'s pain, deſigned to *break his legs*, as well as the Legs of the other Malefactors, as *he hung upon the croſs*: yet, by the ſpeedineſs of his death, God prevented them, to *fulfil the Scripture, which ſaith, a bone of him ſhall not be broken*, John 19. 33, 36. And when the *Corinthians* were full of fears, and apprehenſive of great trials.

S. *Paul*

S. *Paul* tells them, *God is faithful, and will not ſuffer you to be tempted above what ye are able, but will make a way to eſcape* ſo much of *the temptation*, as would prove over-hard for you, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. And this has been the general experience of God's Servants, who, as S. *Paul* ſpeaks, might *be troubled on every ſide, but not diſtreſſed; perplexed, but not in deſpair; perſecuted, but not forſaken; caſt down, but not deſtroyed*, 2 Cor. 4. 8, 9.

Queſt. And as God ſtints the meaſure, as well as appoints the ſeaſon, doth he alſo fix the length and duration of our ſufferings from evil Men?

Anſ. Yes, that is not left to their malice, but as ſoon as our ſufferings have accompliſhed God's ends, he will take care to alter the counſels, and courſe of things. *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reſerve the unjuſt to the day of judgment to be puniſhed*, 2 Pet. 2. 9. And in proportioning this continuance, he uſes great care, and tenderneſs to his Servants, that their ſufferings may not outlaſt their patience, or wear out their hope in him. *The rod of the wicked ſhall not reſt*, or make a fixt abode, and ſtay too long *upon the lot of the righteous, leſt* it put them upon deſperate counſels, *and the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity*, Pſal. 125. 3.

Queſt. If wicked Men are thus an inſtrument in God's Hand, then whatever evils we ſuffer from them, we muſt not

look only at the immediate actors, but ſee beyond them to Almighty God, and own his Providence.

Anſ. Yes, and that will not only teach us to pleaſe him, and to apply our ſelves to him for redreſs; but teach us patience too, becauſe how undeſerved ſoever they may be from others, yet we have deſerved a thouſand times worſe at his hands. *Let him curſe*, ſays *David* of *wicked Shimei*, and would return no ill again, *for the Lord hath bidden him*, 2 Sam. 16. 10, 11. and *I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, becauſe thou didſt it*, Pſal. 39. 9. nay, it will teach us willingneſs in ſubmiſſion. For be the Cup untoothſome, and bitter as Gall and Wormwood: yet he is both *our God*, and *our Father*, that offers it, and we ſhould not ſuſpect any hurt, in what comes from his Hand. *The cup, which my Father hath given me, ſhall I not drink it?* ſaid our Bleſſed Lord of the unparallelled injuries he ſuffered, *John* 18. 11.

Queſt. But if, when Men wickedly afflict us, you ſay, God ſends theſe afflictions; will it not excuſe them to ſay, God gives them ſucceſs againſt us, and they follow Providence?

Anſ. No, in no wiſe. For God doth not excite, or tempt them to injure us. But when they are injurious of themſelves, his Providence ſets us in their way, that their wickedneſs may ſpend it ſelf upon us,

us, to exerciſe our Faith and Patience, or to chaſtiſe our diſobedience. So that they are accountable for their own wickedneſs, and when they will be wicked, all he doth is to over-rule it to ſerve his own deſigns: as he did in the murder of our Bleſſed Saviour, which he *ordered* for the Salvation of the World, though the *Jews ſlew him by wicked hands*, Act. 2. 23. When we ſuffer by other Mens ſins, God, who puniſhes us by them, will puniſh them for them, as he declared of *the Aſſyrian, the rod of his indignation*, *Iſ.* 10. 5, 12, 17. and as all wicked Slanderers, Oppreſſors, Thieves, Rebels, and Murderers, ſhall find to their coſt in the end. It is not acting ſucceſsfully, but acting according to our Duty, which will juſtifie what we do, when God comes to judge us.

Queſt. But if 'tis Providence, that ſends wicked and violent Oppreſſors, ſince it is the Patron of Juſtice, as well as the Chaſtiſer of Undutifulneſs, ſure God will not continue to ſuch Men the Power to oppreſs always?

Anſ. No; the more violent and boiſterous any wicked Oppreſſor is, the ſooner will his Power fail him, and ſpend it ſelf. *The wicked* Oppreſſor, ſays *Solomon*, *paſſes as a whirl-wind*, which may for a while ſtorm terribly, and bluſter, but is quickly over, *Prov.* 10. 25. *The rod of his anger ſhall fail*; that is, the Might, or even the Authority

whereby he ſcourges, ſhall not bear him out, or preſerve him in unjuſt violence: but by abuſing Power, he ſhall ſoon loſe it, and then reap that trouble he has juſtly deſerved, *Prov.* 22. 8. And therefore when any are oppreſſed by Potent Neighbours, or Men of Violence, they may ſupport themſelves to think, that God ſees all their wrongs, and in due time will give them eaſe.

Queſt. I ſee, thoſe evils, which befal our ſelves in our own particulars, are the allotment of Providence. But if there be any miſcarriages of State and Government, muſt the People look upon theſe too to be of God's ſending?

Anſ. Yes, and generally as a puniſhment for the wickedneſs, and provocations of a Nation. *For the tranſgreſſions of a land, many are the princes thereof*, Prov. 28. 2. And through *the anger of the Lord* being *kindled againſt Iſrael, God moved David*, that is, left him to be won by * *Satan* moving him, *to number the people*, 2 Sam. 24. 1. So that in any publick miſcarriages, we muſt not ſpend our ſelves in exclaiming againſt Miniſters of State, and the Inſtruments concerned therein: but look up to the Juſtice of Almighty God, and reflect with patience, and penitent hearts, upon our own ſins, which are puniſhed in them.

* 1 Chron. 21. 1.

Queſt. But muſt we think God's Providence directs and diſpoſes, when Publick Affairs

Affairs are moſt tumultuary and irregular, and ſeem to ſhew forth feweſt footſteps of his perfections?

Anſ. Yes, *the Lord reigns, though the people tremble* through convulſive and diſtracting fears; *he ſitteth between the cherubims, though the earth be moved* with the violence of ſtirs and tumults, *Pſalm* 99. 1. And this muſt ſupport all good Men in the moſt dangerous, and diſtracted times, becauſe even then they are ſtill under God, and are not at the Mercy of all the ill chances and threatning evils, that fly round about them, which, how looſe ſoever they may ſeem to fly abroad, are yet all bound up in God's Hand.

Queſt. If 'tis God, that ſends all theſe evils, then whenſoever any of them threaten and hang over us, we muſt look up to him, and have Faith in his Providence.

Anſ. Yes, and that too, though we ſeem reduced almoſt to irremediable extremities. For God loves to delay deliverance to the laſt, that our Faith and dependance, may be more throughly tried; and then ſhows himſelf neareſt to us, when we have no more hope left in our ſelves, or in any humane means. Thus he appeared not to *ſave Iſaac's life*, till *Abraham's hand was ſtretched out* to take it away, *Gen.* 22. 10, 11. And then God comes as a *preſent help*, when we are in the very *time of need*,

Pſalm 46. 1. & Heb. 4. 16. He chuſes the time of our diſtreſs, to give us a more affecting ſenſe of our deliverance. And then too he often works it, by thoſe very things, which ſeem not only unprofitable, but oppoſite, and apt to hinder it: that no part of the honour of it may go to humane means, but that the whole of it may be aſcribed to himſelf.

Queſt. You have ſhown that God orders all thoſe ill events, which croſs accidents, or ill Men bring upon us. But what ſay you to thoſe, which we bring upon our ſelves, by our own groſs faults, or follies? Muſt they be aſcribed to God's Providence?

Anſ. No; this *Solomon* taxes in fond ſinners, that when *the fooliſhneſs of man perverteth his way*, and he *falls* becauſe he is *Ignorant*, or raſh and *haſty with his feet*: yet for all this, *his heart fretteth againſt the Lord*, as if not his own pure folly, but God had brought him to it, *Prov.* 19. 2, 3. The moſt Holy God forbids all our faults, and the moſt Wiſe God diſclaims all our follies, which we muſt not aſcribe to him, but take to our ſelves. As all Perſons muſt do, when they throw away themſelves in fooliſh Marriages, or throw away their Eſtates by extravagance, and fooliſh projects, or are any other ways the direct Authors of their own miſeries, which they bring upon themſelves by going againſt his

his will, either in ſuch ſins as he forbids, or in ſuch follies as he diſapproves. When our calamities are thus of our own ſeeking, we muſt not remove the blame from off our ſelves by caſting it on God, and ſay they are of his ſending. *Say not thou*, as the *wiſe ſon of Sirach* moſt piouſly and juſtly cautions, *it is through the Lord that I fell away; for thou oughteſt not to do the things, that he hateth. Say not thou, he hath cauſed me to err:* for *he hath no need of the ſinful man*, Eccluſ. 15. 11, 12.

Queſt. By this I perceive, when any Perſons have made a fooliſh Marriage, or otherwiſe done fooliſhly for themſelves; you would not have them ſay, as too ordinarily they do, that ſuch match was made in Heaven, and is what God had decreed for them.

Anſ. No, by no means. For that is only to make God accountable for their faults. And is it fit, when they are aſhamed of a thing, to lay it upon God to excuſe themſelves? God bids no Man do fooliſhly, or wickedly; nor tempts him to it. *Let no man ſay, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God. For God cannot be tempted with evil, neither doth he tempt any man*, James 1. 13.

Queſt. But doth God no way allot theſe for us?

Anſ. Yes, he allots the miſeries as a puniſhment, after we have been ſo faulty, or fooliſh: but he doth not allot that fooliſh

liſh miſcarriage, whereby we bring the miſery upon our heads. For God is not the Author, either of the ſins, or follies of Men, being in himſelf all Holineſs, and Wiſdom. What is well done by us, we muſt aſcribe to him, but all that is ill, we muſt take to our own ſelves.

Queſt. But is he not ſometimes concerned in ſending Mens faults and follies too, as well as the miſeries, in puniſhment of former provocations? For when Men have been great ſinners, he is oft provoked, as you noted above, to withdraw his Grace in juſt Judgment, and leave them to themſelves, whence they fall ſtill into more folly, and wickedneſs.

Anſ. Yes, by way of puniſhment, God ſometimes gives Men up thus to ſin, and folly. Not that he tempts, or inclines Men, to be either fooliſh, or wicked, as I ſaid: but that, when they are throughly prepared of themſelves to be ſo, in his juſt Judgment he withdraws his abuſed Grace, the continuance whereof might help to prevent it, and leaves them to themſelves, and the incitation of evil Spirits, as I have before declared.

Queſt. So that if any Perſons would aſcribe any ſhare in their miſcarriages to God, it muſt only be in owning his Juſtice, and taking ſhame to themſelves, confeſſing he Righteouſly gave them up to them, in puniſhment of former ſins?

Anſ.

Anſ. Yes.

Queſt. You have inſtanced in fooliſh Marriages: and I ſee we muſt not impute them to Deſtiny, and God's irreſiſtible Decrees, which is only a throwing the blame on God to clear our ſelves. But do not you think, that the Providence of God, which numbers even the Hairs of our Heads, is more than ordinarily concerned in making Marriages, which are an affair of higheſt importance?

Anſ. I make no doubt of it. *Houſes, and lands, are the inheritance of fathers; but a prudent wife is from the Lord*, Prov. 19. 14. & 18. 22. But when God's Providence orders, and accompliſhes Marriages, it is not by fate, and irreſiſtible ways; but only by affording ſuch opportunities and inducements, as, though oft-times they may very potently induce, yet leave a liberty in the Perſons themſelves, I ſuppoſe, eſpecially ere they are ſuffered to proceed too far, to refuſe. When God brings them about, it is in a way agreeable to free Creatures, who have a liberty to refuſe, and voluntarily of themſelves take hold of theſe offers and facilitating turns of Providence, to bring about their own Marriages; whence, being a matter of their own doing, they are accountable for them, and deſerve Praiſe when they beſtow themſelves wiſely, and blame when they do fooliſhly.

Queſt.

Queſt. As for all the actions, which we do then, I perceive we muſt believe that God obſerves them. And as for all the good or ill events, which we meet with, we muſt believe he orders and allots them for us, and be accordingly affected with them?

Anſ. Yes, and that is *walking before God*, as *Abraham* was bid to do, *Gen.* 17. 1. and owning Providence, which is the ground of all Religion, and the great Character through all the *Scriptures* of good Men: and is not only the perfection of our affection, and ſervice to Almighty God; but the only ground of ſolid comfort and tranquillity of mind, under all the various accidents of this World.

Queſt. Is this Great, and Good God, that made, and ſtill preſerves, and carefully provides for us, not only our Friend, but alſo *our Father?*

Anſ. Yes, he is the Father of our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, and, for his ſake, he is *our Father* too. And ſo he has taught us to call him, and pray, *Our Father which art in Heaven*, &c.

Queſt. What muſt this teach us?

Anſ. Not only to take the freedom of acceſs, and the confidence; but withal to pay the Reverence, and dutiful Obedience of Children. *If I be a father, where is mine honour?* Mal. 1. 6. To imitate the ways and virtues of our Heavenly Father, and

turn

turn *followers of God as dear children*, Eph. 5. 1. this being a Natural Fruit of Spiritual, as it uſually is of Secular Relation. It muſt engender noble thoughts and purſuits, worthy of this high Alliance, and not ſuffer us to debaſe our ſelves, and diſhonour our Race, by ſinking into ſenſuality, or doting on, and taking up with any vain and periſhing goods of this life. In ſumm, it muſt cauſe us to depend on him, with truſt and affiance; to receive what he ſends, with ſubmiſſion, and cheerfulneſs, and an opinion that it proceeds from kindneſs; with other ſuch like, which are filial tempers.

Queſt. And this *God*, and *Father*, the Creed ſays, is *Almighty*, and *the maker of Heaven and Earth.*

Anſ. Yes, that is added, and is next in courſe to be explained.

Of

Of God's Almightineſs.

CHAP. III.

Of God's Almightineſs.

The Contents.

God's Almightineſs implies, 1. *God's Might and Strength to effect all things,* viz. *all that are the object of any Power. And that are not repugnant to his own Nature. The exerting this Power creates God no labour. He can do, whatſoever any things of the World can do. This an encouragement to all generous Enterprizes. And to build on Providence, eſpecially where we have a Promiſe. The value and acceptance of this truſt, in a ſeemingly moſt improbable caſe. And whatſoever any things of the World are inclined, or wont*

to

to do, he can hinder them from doing. This alſo a ground of truſt in God. And to keep us in any diſtreſs, from flying to unlawful aids. How God will uſe this Power. 2. *His Sovereignty and Power, to command, and order all things. This includes,* 1. *Empire, as a Sovereign Ruler. What things God may command. The unalterableneſs of ſome commands.* 2. *Dominion, as a Sovereign Proprietor. In what caſes God allots good and ill, out of his Power of Prerogative, not according to Mens pre-diſpoſitions. Where he diſpenſes Arbitrarily, he doth it always moſt Wiſely, and Reaſonably. Saving Grace he allots, not in way of Arbitrary Prerogative, but according to Covenant Rules. And Heaven and Hell, in way of Legal Trials. A brief account of the Rectitude of God's Nature, which limits his Sovereign Will, from the Scriptures. This Sovereign Lord and Proprietor an All-ſufficient, ſo no ſelfiſh Being. Several good uſes of God's Sovereign Dominion. God's Majeſty and Almightineſs, muſt beget fear and reverence.*

Queſtion. THE *Almighty* Power of God, is one thing particularly profeſſed in the *Creed*, and when God would give a Character of himſelf, he told *Abraham* he was *the Almighty God*, Gen. 17. 1. Is this Attribute of ſo great account, that in ſo ſhort a Summary it ſhould be ſingled out, and particularly mentioned?

Anſ.

Anſ. Yes, for ſince God has an Almighty Power over all, all muſt fear and ſubmit to him. Since he is able to do all things, his Friends and Servants have cauſe to truſt in him, and depend on him, and in all their wants to ſeek and addreſs to him for convenient ſupplies. So that his Almighty Power, is a main ground of all Religious Service, of Fear, and Faith, or Truſt in God, and all Devotion.

Queſt. What is meant by God's Almightineſs?

Anſ. Two things: 1. That he has Might and Strength, to effect and do. And, 2. That he has Sovereignty and Power, to command and order all things.

Queſt. Has God all Might and Strength, to effect and do all things?

Anſ. Yes, all that are the object of any Power, and all that are not repugnant to his own Nature. He made all this World, and can at his Will make more; and *nothing ſhall be impoſſible with God*, Luke 1. 37.

Queſt. Why do you ſay all that are the object of any Power?

Anſ. Becauſe contradictions are the object of no Power: and though an Almighty Arm muſt be ſufficient for one part of them, as who, by his bare Word, can at his Will ſpeak all things, either out of, or into nothing; yet it is no way concerned to fulfil both at the ſame time. Thus is it no

diminution to the Power of God, that it cannot make twice two ceaſe to be four, or that which is paſt not to have been, or one and the ſame Body to be at once in many and far diſtant places, and yet under all this multiplicity to be but one, becauſe they all imply a contradiction, that is, that a thing ſhould be ſomewhat, and withal that it ſhould not be it, at the ſame time.

Queſt. And why do you add, All that are not Repugnant to his own Nature?

Anſ. Becauſe, as God's power is infinite, ſoe is every other Attribute, and one muſt not deſtroy, or weaken another, but all muſt conſiſt together. Thus, though, as *Chriſt* ſaid, *to God all things are poſſible*, Matth. 19. 26. yet, as St. *Paul* ſaith, *it is impoſſible for God to lye*, Heb. 6. 18. He cannot be ſick, or weary, or ſleepy. He cannot be unjuſt, or cruel, or unfaithful, or delight in ill, or be ignorant of any thing, or change any of his excellencies, or ceaſe to be himſelf, or make other Gods beſides himſelf, or be any other ways imperfect, more than he can be weak and impotent. The properties, and perfections of the Divine Nature, are unalterable by the Divine Power: and it is no more a matter of God's Power, to hinder himſelf from being Pure, or Juſt,

or Good; than it is in the power of the Sun, to reſtrain it ſelf from giving Light; or of the Fire, from giving heat; or of any other thing, from doing what is natural, and neceſſary to it. Whatſoever the Divine Pleaſure can will, that the Divine Power can execute: but God's Will that controuls all things elſe, doth never contradict his own Nature, but is always ſuited to, and ruled by it.

Queſt. And when God exerts this Power in doing things, doth it create him any labour and pains?

Anſ. No, he makes, or unmakes every thing, with a bare *word of his mouth*, as he did at the Creation. We, indeed, are imperfect Natures, and activity ſpends our Powers; and the things we go to alter and act upon, are ſtubborn in ſticking to their own Natures, and make reſiſtance: on which accounts, our actings cauſe trouble and wearineſs. But all things obey every inclination, and tendency of God, with an intire ſubmiſſion; and his Power is Abſolute and Infinite, ſo that if he doth but will any thing, immediately it is done. And therefore it is a vain fancy, and ignorant complement of the *Epicureans* of old, and of all the Enemies of Providence in later times, who would exclude God from the Inſpection, Ordering, and Government

ment of the World, in pretence thereby to ſecure his eaſe and ſelf-enjoyment, and to keep back trouble and toil from him.

Queſt. Can God do, whatſoever any things in the World can do?

Anſ. Yes, for he gave them all their Power of doing it. And retaining ſtill the ſame Power in himſelf, which he communicated to them, as he ordinarily doth things by them, ſo, when he pleaſes, can he do the ſame without them. Thus can he preſerve Life without Meat, as he did to *Moſes*, *Elias*, and our *Saviour Chriſt*, in their *forty days faſt*; and reſtore Health, without the help of Phyſick; and give Children to thoſe who are paſt Child-bearing, as he did to *Sarah*; and make a Maid a Mother without the help of a Father, as in the Generation of our *Saviour*; and give us Bodies without all help of Parents, as he did *out of the duſt of the earth* at firſt to *Adam*, and as he will do at laſt to all in the *general Reſurrection*.

Queſt. What muſt this teach us?

Anſ. Not only to believe him in thoſe Articles of Religion, which ſeem hardeſt in Nature to be brought to paſs, as *Chriſt's being born of a virgin*, and the *general reſurrection*: but alſo to take heart and courage,

in all honeſt and prudent enterprizes, and not ſuddenly to deſiſt, or deſpair of ſucceſs, through the number, and greatneſs of diſcouragements. All virtuous, publick, and generous undertakings, are both acceptable and honourable to God, and ſo more like to have a ſure Friend of Providence. And when God eſpouſes any cauſe, though there be little probability, and preparation for it in Natural appearance, yet will it ſurely come to paſs, ſince he has the Power and Probability of all his Creatures in himſelf.

Queſt. Indeed, Men ſo backed, muſt needs ſpeed deſigns, where there are fewer viſible preparations, and find ſucceſs beyond appearances.

Anſ. Yes, and the proſpect of that animated the *Apoſtles* to go on couragiouſly in *converting the World*, an attempt impoſſible in all human judgment. And all *Ancient*, and *Modern Worthies*, to ſet on any *Publick Reformations* in evil times, and do the World good againſt their wills. And all honeſt Men, whoſe cauſe was good, and dear to God, to hope he would ſtand by it, and reſtore it, even when they ſaw it reduced to the laſt extremities. In ſumm, in licentious times, it has heretofore, and muſt ſtill ſtrengthen *Magiſtrates*, in aſſerting Laws and Juſtice; and *Miniſters*, in preaching

preaching down prevailing errors, and reigning vices; and all *Publick Spirits*, in purſuing Pious, or Charitable Projects; and all *Good Men*, in ſupporting the oppreſſed, in curbing vice, in breaking wicked cuſtoms, in ſetting on any great honour of God, or good Men, in their ſeveral ſtations. They muſt not haſtily think they ſhall not be able to effect, what they have cauſe to hope God will ſet forward: but believe, as S. *Paul* ſaid, that *they can do all things, through Chriſt ſtrengthening them*, Phil. 4. 13. But then their hope and confidence muſt ſtill be fixed in God, not in themſelves, or outward aids: and when they go to meet difficulties, it muſt be as *David* did to meet *Goliah*, only *in the Name of the Lord of hoſts*, 1 Sam. 17. 45.

Queſt. Muſt this conſideration, of God's having in him the Power of all his Creatures, teach us any thing elſe?

Anſ. Yes, to truſt his Providence for the ſupply of any wants, eſpecially where he has given us any Word and Promiſe. Nay, then to hold on truſting, even in the moſt deſtitute caſes, and againſt all probabilities. For all things, even the hardeſt and moſt improbable, are equally eaſie unto God, ſo that nothing muſt ſeem improbable, which he declares he will bring about. When Faith and Truſt is in Man,

or any Earthly thing, it is ruled by probability. But when it is in a Power Almighty, it makes no difference of likely, or unlikely. As *Abraham*'s Faith did not, when he believed God's Promiſe to *ſend him a ſon*, though at that time, both *Sarah*, and he, were too old in courſe of Nature to have one: and to make that Son a *numerous ſeed*, which he firmly believed at the ſame time he was commanded to offer him up, and ſo could have no Son by him, unleſs he were firſt reſtored to him from the dead.

Queſt. This, indeed, ſhows a high eſteem, and confidence in God, to relie upon his Word when there is not the leaſt ſign of its taking effect, but things look, as if there were no way for it to be effected.

Anſ. Yes, ſo it doth. And therefore among all acts of Religion, there is none that doth more endear Men to God. This *our Father Abraham* found, it being upon this account, that he became ſo dear to God, as to be *called the friend of God*, Jam. 2. 23. and *the father of the faithful*, Rom. 4. 11. 16. and that *his boſom* ſhould be made the *receptacle* of the bleſſed, *Luke* 16. 22. For *his Faith*, ſaith the *Apoſtle*, above all his other virtues, *was imputed to him for righteouſneſs*, Rom. 4. 3, 9. And among all his acts

acts of Faith, thoſe God was pleaſed to impute to him, as the moſt notable, which were ſhown in theſe two difficult inſtances. *He ſtaggered not* at the unlikelihood of his *having a ſon, but was fully perſuaded, that what God had promiſed, he was able to perform: and therefore*, ſaith S. *Paul*, *it was imputed unto him for righteouſneſs*, Rom. 4. 19, 20, 21, 22. And *when he offered Iſaac his ſon upon the altar*, ſays S. *James*, then *the Scripture was fulfilled, which ſaith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteouſneſs: and he was called the friend of God*, Jam. 2. 21, 23. Such is the extraordinary value, and recompence, of truſting God in a ſeemingly moſt improbable, and deſperate caſe, where 'tis viſibly put to a puſh of Omnipotence to make good his Promiſe.

Queſt. I ſee God can do, whatſoever any things in the World can do. But can he alſo hinder any things in the World, from doing whatſoever they are naturally bent, or wont to do?

Anſ. Yes, for as by him they were all made, ſo, as the *Apoſtle* * ſays, in him they ſtill *ſubſiſt*, and *move*, and operate: and therefore whenſoever he pleaſes to ſuſpend, or withdraw their Power, they have no longer uſe of it. Thus the † *fire* could not conſume, nor ſinge *Shadrach*, *Meſhach*, and *Abednego*; nor the * *hungry Lyons* faſten on the

* Act. 17. 28.

† Dan. 3. 27.

* Dan. 6. 22.

* Act. 28. 5. † Exod. 12. 13, 23. * Pſal. 91. 1, 6, 7, 8. † John 7. 30. * Job 1. 12. & 2. 6.

the *Prophet Daniel*; nor the * *venemous Beaſt* ſting the *Holy Apoſtle*; nor the † *deſtroying Angel* touch an *Iſraelite*; nor the * *Plague*, or *Peſtilence*, or other contagious Diſeaſe, infect or ſeize the *Pſalmiſt*; nor the † *wicked Jews* act their ſpite on our *Saviour Chriſt*; nor the * *Infernal Spirits* touch *Job*, or try his Patience, whilſt God was pleaſed to withhold them. He ſuſpends the Operations of all hurtful Creatures, evil Men, and wicked Spirits, at his Will: ſo that they invade no Perſon, and act at no time, but only when, and ſo far as he allows them.

Queſt. And what muſt this teach us?

Anſ. Not haſtily to conclude any caſe of good Men deſperate, and incapable of cure, or eaſe. For when dangers, or diſaſters, from the moſt hurtful things, or Perſons, threaten moſt, 'tis but for God to interpoſe, and either divert, or ſuſpend their power, and then the moſt fierce and miſchievous things become tame and harmleſs, and the dangers from them little, or none at all. And thus he is wont to interpoſe for good Men; reſcuing them, as he did Holy *David* frequently, out of the very jaws of Death; and ſaving them, as he did S. *Paul*, after he *had the ſentence of death in himſelf*, 2 Cor. 1. 9.

Queſt.

Queſt. But what if we are at the laſt extremities? muſt we hope ſtill, when evil is faſtning upon us, or at the very door?

Anſ. Yes, if we have any expreſs promiſe of deliverance: for God, as I noted formerly, never forgets his Word, though ſometimes he may delay the performance of it to the laſt. Or, if we have an expreſs command for the work, wherein the danger meets us, as S. *Peter* had for *coming to Chriſt upon the water.* For ſince *Chriſt* bid him do the thing, he ſhould have hoped to the end that he would ſtand by him, and therefore was rebuked for *doubting* and *ſtaggering in Faith*, though it were when *the wind was boiſtrous*, ready to bury him in every Wave, and *he* already *began to ſink*, Matth. 14. 29, 30, 31. Or, laſtly, if we have no other claim for relief, but only from God's Providence, whoſe Protection we may generally preſume on in his own ways, and in purſuit of all good and prudent enterprizes: as our *Lord* intimates, when he rebukes *the Apoſtles for want of Faith in fearing Shipwrack*, though they neither had any particular command to Sail, nor expreſs promiſe of a ſafe Voyage, but were to ground this Faith on being under his Protection, and going on lawful Errands, *Matth.* 8. 24, 25, 26. God very commonly

monly ſuffers good Mens dangers, which at laſt he deſigns to remove, to go on firſt to the greateſt extremities, that their Faith and Truſt may paſs through a more full trial, and illuſtrious exerciſe.

Queſt. Muſt it teach us any thing elſe?

Anſ. Yes, *Secondly*, in no caſe to forſake God, and fly to any Foreign and unlawful Aids. For if we ſtick to him, this overruling Power, when things are at the worſt, can with a Word put all the evil by, and reſcue us. And if we forſake him, he can as eaſily turn that Power againſt us, and make us fall by our own ſuccours. For as this Almighty Arm, is able to bring all things about for us; ſo, when it pleaſes, can it alſo bring them about againſt us, in ſpite of all probabilities.

Queſt. This is a ſtupendious height of Power: how will God employ it?

Anſ. In making good all his Promiſes, and executing all his Threatnings, heaping Favours on his Friends and faithful Servants, and Judgments on his Enemies. So that all Holy Men ſhall taſte the ſweetneſs of it, in endearing Providences in this World, as *Jacob*, *Joſeph*, *David*, and the *Patriarchs*, and pious Men of old did: and in Glorious, and endleſs Rewards in the next.

next. And wicked Men ſhall feel the ſmart of it, in all the croſſes, and penal inflictions of this Life, and in the everlaſting torments of the Life to come.

Queſt. If this irreſiſtible Power, were not to be thus juſtly, and kindly uſed, though we ſhould baſely fear and dread, yet ſhould we not love and value him that has it.

Anſ. No, for nothing is ſo hateful, as power in the hands of malice, which makes us have ſuch an utter hatred of the powers of darkneſs. And this muſt teach all ambitious Men, never to covet; and all Potent Men, never to employ their Power, to oppreſs, or tyrannize, to accompliſh unlawful Luſts, or to work their wills on others. But only to encourage Virtue, and reward it, to protect the innocent, relieve the oppreſſed, curb the vicious, or ſome way or other to do good with it.

Queſt. Another Branch of God's Almightineſs, you ſaid, is his *Sovereignty* and Power, to command, and order all things. What mean you by God's *Sovereignty?*

Anſ. His Supreme Authority, being accountable to none, but having Power to order, and injoyn all things, as ſeemeth fitteſt to his own Wiſdom.

Queſt.

Queſt. What doth this imply?

Anſ. Two things: both *Empire*, that is, a Power to injoyn and command as a Ruler; and *Dominion*, that is, a Power to allot and diſpoſe as a Proprietor. God may give any Commands, and exact them of any Perſons, as an abſolute Governour: and make any diſtributions of Things, or allotment of States and Conditions, as an abſolute Lord and Proprietor. And he is Sovereign in both theſe, being bound to pleaſe none, but only to order as ſeems beſt to himſelf.

Queſt. Doth God exerciſe over the World a Sovereign Empire?

Anſ. Yes, all other Rulers, as the *Apoſtle* ſays, are but *his miniſters*, Rom. 13. 4. but he ſtill keeps the controlling Power, and the Reins of Government in his own Hands, being *the bleſſed, and only Potentate, King of kings, and Lord of lords*, 1 Tim. 6. 15. *He hath prepared his throne in heaven, and his kingdom ruleth over all*, Pſalm 103. 19. And this Empire he exerciſes, in giving and exacting all Commands, and guiding and directing all Actions, and turns in the World, as he pleaſes.

Queſt.

Queſt. Has God an abſolute, and unlimited Power, to command all things?

Anſ. Yes, all that his Creatures, by his Grace, are capable of doing; and all that his moſt Holy, and Perfect Nature, is capable of injoyning.

Queſt. Why do you ſay, all his Creatures, by his Grace, are capable of doing?

Anſ. Becauſe his moſt juſt, and equitable Government, cannot impoſe an impoſſible thing. His Laws, indeed, might be impoſſible to us, conſidered naked in our own ſtrength, but not as conſider'd under thoſe aſſiſtances, and that ſtrength, which he is ready to afford us. He doth not reap where he has not ſown, and whatſoever his Laws require, his Spirit will aſſiſt Men to perform, *His commandments are not grievous*, 1 John 5. 3. and *his yoke is eaſie, and its burden light*, Matth. 11. 30.

Queſt. Why do you add alſo, all that his moſt Holy, and Perfect Nature, is capable of injoyning?

Anſ. To ſhew he doth not give Commands out of unlimited Will, and Arbitrarineſs; but doth all according to unalterable Principles of Goodneſs, and Juſtice. He

He may command whatſoever he will: but then he cannot will all that we may fancy, but only all that is like himſelf, *i. e.* all that is Wiſe, and Good. He never Wills againſt the Perfection of his Nature, becauſe he will do it.

Queſt. I perceive then, that God having commanded Holineſs, and Juſtice, and Mercifulneſs, and Truth, and Faithfulneſs, and the like, which are his own Natural Perfections, there is no poſſibility of his reverſing theſe Commands to ſhew unlimitedneſs of Will, and commanding their contraries.

Anſ. No; in commanding theſe Virtues, he only commands us to be like himſelf: to be *holy as he is holy*, *perfect* in kindneſs *as he is perfect*, as the * *Scripture* ſays. And being Tranſcripts of his own Perfections, theſe Virtues are a limitation to his Will, and whilſt he is himſelf, he can never will them to be otherwiſe. Indeed, it is his Command, which makes them become duties to us, and inſtances of our obedience: but that, which made him command them, was the Goodneſs they had antecedent to his Command, as being Draughts of his own Perfections. He willed them, becauſe they were Good, and like himſelf. And he being unchangeable, they muſt be always like him, and upon that account he muſt

* 1 Pet. 1. 16. Matth. 5. 48.

muſt always will them; whence they are ſaid to be duties of Eſſential, and Eternal Goodneſs and Obligation.

Queſt. Doth God exerciſe this Empire alſo in guiding, and directing all Actions, and Turns in the World, as he pleaſes?

Anſ. Yes, *he doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can ſtay his hand, or ſay unto him, What doeſt thou?* as *Nebuchadnezzar* moſt juſtly acknowledged, when he *returned to himſelf*, Dan. 4. 35. He preſides in all Councils, and directs, and over-rules all Actions and Events. *I form the light, and create darkneſs, I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all theſe things*, Iſaiah 45. 7. And this Adminiſtration of things, is called his Providence, which has already been diſcourſed of.

Queſt. Has God alſo a Sovereign Dominion, to diſpoſe of all things, and allot all their different ſtates and conditions, as a Supreme Proprietor?

Anſ. Yes, his Hand made all things, beſtowing upon them both the Workmanſhip and the Materials, and his Power ſtill preſerves them, and all this for what uſes he pleaſes. *Thou haſt created all things, and for thy pleaſure they are, and were created,* Rev.

Rev. 4. 11. *As the clay is in the potters hand, to form it* into a Veſſel either honourable, or baſe, *ſo are ye in my hand, ſaith the Lord,* Jer. 18. 6. *The heaven is his, and the heaven of heavens,* Deut. 10. 14. *the earth, and all the fulneſs thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein,* Pſal. 24. 1. And being thus abſolute, and univerſal a Proprietor, he places and alters, grants and reſumes all things at pleaſure. And when *he takes away,* ſays *Job, who can hinder him, or ſay unto him, What doſt thou?* Job 9. 12.

Queſt. I ſee that all the good and evil, both of this World, and of the next, are in God's Hand, to allot as he ſees fit. Doth he allot them according to any rules, and in recompence of Mens prediſpoſitions: or Arbitrarily, out of Sovereign Will, according as he pleaſes?

Anſ. In allotting the principal things, particularly the Eternal pains and pleaſures of another life, and, in general, all rewards and puniſhments, he has graciouſly bounded his own unlimited Power, by Laws and Compacts. But as for all good and evil things, which are not under Promiſes or Covenants, he diſpenſes them Arbitrarily, as he ſees fit. And as thoſe allotments of good and evil, which he makes in recompence to Mens Deeds, and according to the direction of his own Laws and Promiſes,

misses, may be called the *Legal Distributions*, and *Covenant-Justice:* so may those, wherein he has not limited himself by any such Contracts, be called the *Prerogative Power*, and *Arbitrary Will* of this Almighty Potentate.

Quest. In what things doth God act with us, out of his *Power of Prerogative*, allotting good or evil things, or states of life, according to his own unlimited Will, and not according to Mens qualities and predispositions?

Ans. I do not say he acts constantly so: but oft-times he doth.

1. In allotting Mens different state, and worldly circumstances: as that one should be born of Noble Parents, to great Fortunes, or honourable Employments, with a well-shaped healthy Body, or pregnant parts; and another should be born mean, or servile, or sickly, or mis-shaped, or poor, or fooliſh. Thus, when the *Jews* asked the reason of a *man's being born blind*, whether *for his parents sin, or his own*; our Saviour told them there was no need for that, to seek out for such precedent desert, either in him, or them, but 'tis enough to say it was, *that the works of God might be made manifest in him*, John 9. 2, 3.

2. In allotting their different outward helps for Religion, and Spiritual opportu-

nities; as that one should be born of Christian Parents, trained up in an Orthodox Belief, and pure Worship, in the Eyes of good Examples, and under the care of skilful Pastors; and that another should be deprived of some, or, perhaps, of all these. Thus, the difference, both in *Secular*, and *Ecclesiastical* Priviledges, which God put between the *Jews* and *Edomites*, (*the elder serving the younger*, not being intended, or verified of *Jacob* and *Esau*'s Persons, *Jacob* rather serving *Esau*, than *Esau* him, *Gen.* 33. 3. but of their Posterities, of whom *God* expresly speaks it, when he first declared it to *Rebekah*, Gen. 25. 23. and to whom *Malachy*, from whom also S. *Paul* cites this passage, doth apply it, *Mal.* 1. 2, 3.) this difference, says the *Apostle*, was an allotment out of *God*'s Sovereign *Will*, and not out of their precedent *deserts*; God declaring that to *Rebekkah*, *while the children were yet unborn, and had neither done good nor ill*, to prepare them for this discrimination, *Rom.* 9. 11, 12, 13. These different allotments, of National Priviledges to *Jews* above *Edomites*, and afterwards, as he * there notes, to *Gentiles* above *Jews*, when the *Jews* were *cast off*, and the *Gentiles* taken into the Church in their place, was *no unrighteousness in God*, who *hath mercy on whom he will have mercy*, verse 14, 15.

* Ver. 23, 24, 25, 26, 30.

Lastly,

Laſtly, to name no more, when he offers what is ſufficient to all, to enable them to do his will if they are not wanting to themſelves, which renders all without excuſe; yet allotting more eminent, and efficacious degrees of Grace to ſome Perſons, and ſhewing more reſpite and forbearance towards ſome offenders, than he doth to others, whom he ſtrikes with a ſwifter vengeance, cutting them off, it may be, in their very firſt attempts. Thus his ſparing *Pharaoh*, and ſtill *raiſing him up* again to a new trial after numerous repulſes, S. *Paul* aſcribes to God's Sovereignty, who *has mercy on whom he will have mercy*, Rom. 9. 17, 18.

In allotting theſe different worldly Circumſtances, and external Priviledges and Opportunities, and more eminent degrees of inward Grace, and ſhewing this different forbearance, God uſes the ſame Prerogative Power, and abſolute Sovereignty over his Creatures, which *the potter doth over the clay*, as S. *Paul* ſays, *forming one veſſel to honour, and another to diſhonour*, not becauſe of any different fineneſs of the matter, but, taking both *out of the ſame lump*, out of his own will and pleaſure, *Rom.* 9. 21.

Queſt. But in theſe allotments, where God diſpenſes Arbitrarily, doth he not always diſpenſe Wiſely, and Reaſonably?

Anſ. Yes, moſt certainly. Mans will is too oft a blind, precipitate reſolution. But God's Will is never without Reaſon, and the higheſt Counſel directs him, where he ſeems moſt Arbitrary in acting. *He works all things, according to the counſel of his own will*, Eph. 1. 11. So that he is ſaid to act out of Will, not as if he did not Will upon good Reaſon, but becauſe that Reaſon is not his being directed ſo by any of his Laws or Covenants, or to recompence any pre diſpoſitions of his Creatures. 'Tis Arbitrary, becauſe uncovenanted, and left to himſelf. But whatſoever is left to him, is ſure to be managed with the higheſt Equity, Wiſdom, and Goodneſs, as will appear to all, when we ſhall be let in to behold the Counſel of God's actings.

Queſt. Doth God uſe this Prerogative-Power, in allotting Saving Grace, ſo that one ſhall have the help of his Spirit in a good way, and another ſhall be denied it, though he ſeeks it earneſtly and ſincerely, only becauſe God pleaſes?

Anſ. No, this is under Promiſes and Compacts, and is to be diſpenſed and meaſured out to Men, according to their readineſs to comply with, and their care to ſeek, and make uſe of it. *If any man lack wiſdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men*

men liberally, Jam. 1. 5. *God will give the holy ſpirit to thoſe that ask him*, Luke 11. 13. and *to every one that hath*, that is, improves his *talents*, *ſhall be given*, Matth. 25. 29. Theſe are the Covenant-Rules, for allotting Saving Graces.

Queſt. Or doth he uſe it in allotting Heaven and Hell, and diſpenſing Eternal Rewards and Puniſhments?

Anſ. No, theſe are not given in way of Arbitrary Diſpenſations, but of Legal Trials. At the laſt day, *men muſt all appear before Chriſt, to receive according to what they have done in the body, whether it be good, or bad*, 2 Cor. 5. 10. they muſt *all be judged according to their works*, Rev. 20. 12, 13.

Queſt. So that no Man who lives ill, muſt think that God, to ſhew his Sovereignty, may ſave him if he will; nor any Man, that lives well, fear leſt God, to ſhew his Sovereignty, may damn him if he will; nor if any Perſon ſeriouſly ſets himſelf to be good, muſt he harbour any jealouſie of Prerogative-Power, and Arbitrary decrees againſt him, whereby he ſhould be ſhut out from that Grace, which is neceſſary to help him to be ſo.

Anſ. No, there were not the leaſt danger of that, had we nothing elſe to truſt

to, but the abſolute Holineſs, Juſtice, and Goodneſs, of the Divine Nature. But moreover, in theſe moſt important diſpoſals, God acts not out of Arbitrary, unlimited Power, but as he has made himſelf a Legal, Covenanting Governour, that is graciouſly pleaſed to rule the World by Laws and Compacts, and will diſtribute rewards and puniſhments according to them. So that in expecting any of theſe from him, we muſt not have recourſe to any fancied ſecret Decrees, but only to revealed Promiſes, and Covenant-Declarations. And theſe, as I have ſhown, pronounce Mercy on the good, and Vengeance on the bad, and the Spirit and Grace of God, to all that ſincerely and carefully ſeek after it. In relation to future recompences, ſaith S. *John*, *God is juſt*, 1 John 1. 9. And in relation to preſent aſſiſtances, ſaith S. *Paul*, *God is faithful*, 1 Cor. 10. 13. And in relation to both, ſaith he again, *God is not unrighteous*, Heb. 6. 10. So making, not abſolute Will and Prerogative-Arbitrarineſs, but Moral Honeſty and Covenant-Juſtice, the ground of Mens expectation from him in theſe matters.

Queſt. You have ſeveral times mentioned the rectitude of God's Nature, as well as the voluntary addition of his Laws and Compacts, for the limitation of his Sovereign Will and Power. And the Divine

Divine Nature you have particularly explained before: but I ſhould be glad to have a brief account, of his ways and temper, from the Holy *Scripture*.

Anſ. Thus they repreſent him. *That 'tis impoſſible for God to lie*, Heb. 6. 18. that *he is faithful, and cannot deny himſelf*, 2 Tim. 2. 13. *He is of purer eyes, than to behold iniquity*, Hab. 1. 13. *he hates all workers of it*, Pſalm 5. 5. *He cannot be tempted with evil, nor tempt any man to it*, James 1. 13. *All his ways are judgment, a God of Truth, and without iniquity, juſt and right is he*, Deut. 32. 4. *He regardeth not perſons, nor taketh rewards*, Deut. 10. 17. *He loveth righteouſneſs, and beholdeth the upright*, Pſalm 11. 7. He is *merciful, and gracious, long-ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs and truth, keeping mercy for thouſands*, Exod. 34. 6, 7. *God is love*, 1 John 4. 8, 16. And as *he will by no means clear the guilty*, Exod. 34. 7. ſo has *he no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked man turn from his way, and live*, Ezek. 33. 11. Theſe are the Almighty Deities fixt, and immutable Ways, and Principles, which he never thwarts, or contradicts, to ſhew abſoluteneſs of Power and Wilfulneſs.

Queſt. If Almighty God is the Proprietor of all things, and can do what he pleaſes, he muſt be All-ſufficient in himſelf,

ſelf, and need no acceſſions from any Body to his Happineſs?

Anſ. So he is. *My goodneſs*, ſaith *David, extendeth not to thee*, Pſalm 16. 2. He needs nothing, that any Creatures can offer to him; and if he did, he could ſupply himſelf with them, ſince all the World can preſent him with nothing, but what they have from him.

Queſt. If we are ſo poor, that we can give, and he ſo full, that he can receive nothing; 'tis plain he is no ſelfiſh Being, nor ſeeks any ſeparate Intereſts of his own, by any ſervices we are to pay him.

Anſ. Very true. His ends are only to communicate Happineſs, not to gain it. And this may ſhew Men how unneceſſary their ſcruple is, who fear they are not ſincere in God's Service, if they ſeek thereby to benefit themſelves. For in that, their end is not different, but the ſame with his. They ſeek his Glory, in purſuing their own trueſt good, for in giving, not receiving it is, that he ſeeks to be glorified.

Queſt. What muſt God's Sovereignty, and abſolute Dominion teach us?

Anſ.

Anſ. Firſt, ſince all we poſſeſs, is held under him, never to compaſs any worldly thing by fraud, or falſhood, or any deceitful and diſhoneſt dealing. For ſince God never allows of ſuch, whoſoever come into Poſſeſſions that way, have no conſent, or grant from him. So that whatever they hold, it is not by any Title of Right and Lawful Claim, but only by unjuſt Uſurpation.

Queſt. What do we learn from this abſolute Dominion beſides?

Anſ. Secondly, to be content with that ſtate and condition, and that portion of Goods and Accommodation, which God allots us. For be our part what it will, and other Mens never ſo much above it, as moſt are apt to fancy all their own burthens heavieſt, and their own injoyments leaſt: yet, God having as abſolute Propriety to make one Rich, and another Poor, as the * *Potter* has, *out of the ſame lump, to frame one veſſel to honour, and another to diſhonour*, they muſt needs be moſt rightfully diſpoſed. Yea, moreover, whatever little any of us injoy, in compariſon with others, yet is that little wholly undeſerved; and if from the ſame bounty, which grants us our ſhare, any other Men have more, *our eye muſt not be evil, becauſe God's is good*, Matth. 20. 15.

* Jer. 18. 6. Rom. 9. 21.

Queſt.

Queſt. Muſt it teach us any thing elſe?

Anſ. Yes, *Thirdly*, to be content when he reſumes his own allotments. For when he grants us things, he ſtill keeps the Propriety in himſelf. He makes no *Tenants in Fee*, no, nor ſo much as *Tenants for Life*: Whatſoever outward things we hold under him, it is all as *Tenants at Will*, to be diſſeiz'd when he pleaſes. And therefore whenſoever God lends us Health, or Wealth, or Honour, or Friends, or Children, we muſt injoy them with an apprehenſion of their being only Loans for a time, and with a readineſs to reſign them up, when called for again. As good *old Eli did*, who upon an irreparable degradation of his Family, from a ſtate of higheſt Power and dignity, to the greateſt want and meanneſs, only ſaid, *it is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth him good*, 1 Sam. 3. 18. And as *Job*, who upon his ſudden and amazing change of fortune, when from the moſt rich and happy, in a few minutes time he was made the moſt poor and miſerable of all the Men in the *Eaſt*, ſaid only, *the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, bleſſed be the name of the Lord*, Job 1. 21.

Queſt. Muſt it teach us any thing more?

Anſ.

Anſ. Yes, *Fourthly*, to uſe all his allotments to his Honour, whilſt he ſpares them to us. He makes no Proprietors, but only *Stewards*, 1 Pet. 4. 9, 10. And *in ſtewards it is required, that they prove faithful*, 1 Cor. 4. 2. employing what is under their charge, to their Maſters ends, uſe, and intereſt. And therefore no Perſons, to whom God has given Eſtates, muſt think them a priviledge, for being idle, and careleſs; or for ſpending them wholly upon ſports and paſtimes, as if wealthy Perſons were made for no other buſineſs, but diverſions; and much leſs for laying them out in oſtentation of Pride, and Vanity; or in miniſtring to Vice and Luxury. Health, and Wit, and Wealth, and other Temporal advantages, being only Loans of God, are to be Faithfully ſtewarded, and laid out, not ſlothfully neglected, waſted, embezelled, or abuſed.

Queſt. Are we to learn from it any thing further?

Anſ. Yes, *Fifthly*, to be humble, and think modeſtly and ſoberly of our ſelves, under any preeminence of Body, or Parts, Power, or Poſſeſſions. When theſe advantages puff Men up with pride, and vain fondneſs, and ſelf-conceit, they arrogate all the fancied honour and eſtimation of them

them to themſelves, as if they were Proprietors. But when they own them as God's Gifts, and Truſts, and themſelves as holding them only during Pleaſure by uncertain Tenures, they will aſcribe all the Honour of them to him, and learn Modeſty, Care, Dependance, and Thankfulneſs. And withal, never inſult, or deride the want of them in others: remembring, that he who *mocketh the poor*, (and the caſe is the ſame in all other Natural Defects, or Calamities,) *reproacheth his Maker*, who diſpoſed of him in that condition, as *Solomon* ſays *Prov.* 17. 5.

Queſt. By this I ſee *God Almighty* is an immenſly Great Being. How muſt the thoughts of ſuch an irreſiſtible Might, and abſolute Sovereignty affect us?

Anſ. With the greateſt ſubmiſſion of Humility, and Reverence. For ſuch immenſe Greatneſs and Majeſty, ſhould ſtrike us with holy fear and ſubmiſſion in the higheſt degree, every time we think, or ſpeak of this Great God, eſpecially in all acts of Adoration and Worſhip, which we pay to him. *Thou muſt fear this glorious, and fearful name, the Lord thy God*, Deut. 28. 58. *He is the excellency of Jacob*, Amos 8. 7. *the moſt high over all the earth*, Pſal. 83. 18. *a great God, a mighty, and terrible*, Deut. 10. 17. *glorious in holineſs, fearful in praiſes, doing*

doing wonders, Exod. 15. 11. *Holy, and reverend is his name*, Pſalm 111. 9.

Queſt. By this Almighty Power, 'tis eaſie to believe God made the World.

Anſ. Yes, thereby *in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*, Gen. 1. 1. And by the ſame Power he ſtill Governs and Preſerves it, as I have before explained.

The End of the Firſt Part.

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PART II.

OR, THE KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST.

By *John Kettlewell*, Minister of *Coles-Hill* in *Warwick-shire.*

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THE

Practical Believer.

PART II.

OR THE

KNOWLEDGE

OF

JESUS CHRIST.

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to

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☞ Through a Mistake there is neither 5*th*. 6*th*. nor 7*th*. Chapters. But tho' in the numbering of the Chapters there is this mistake, yet there is no omission of matter.

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the

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THE

The Practical Believer.

PART II.

Of the Knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt.

CHAP. I.

Of the Office, and Natures of Jeſus Chriſt.

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and Born of a Virgin. He was truly Man. And why he was so.

Quest. WHat is the *Second* Article of the *Creed?*

Answ. And *in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.*

Quest. Jesus signifies a Saviour, from what doth Christ save us?

Answ. From two things. 1. Our sins. 2. Those eternal Torments, which are the Punishment of them.

Quest. If he prove a Saviour to us, must he Reform, and save us from our sins?

Answ. Yes; for this is the main Reason, why that Name was given him. *Thou shalt call his Name Jesus, for he shall save his People from their sins,* Mat. 1. 21.

Quest. Will he save none from the Punishment, but whom he saves from the sins first?

Answ. No; for *except ye Repent, ye shall all perish, Luke* 13. 3. and at last he will say, *Depart from me ye workers of iniquity,* Mat. 7. 23.

Quest. But when once they are delivered from their sins, they may make sure of being freed by him from Eternal Death too?

Answ. Yes; for *there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit,* Rom. 8. 1.

Quest. Christ, signifies *anointed* among the *Greeks,* as *Messiah* doth among the *Hebrews; Messiah, if interpreted, being the Christ,* or

or anointed, as St. *Andrew* ſaid, *John* 1. 41. But what mean you, when you call *Jeſus* the *Meſſiah* or *Chriſt*, that is, the anointed?

Anſw. His being inveſted with the Office of a *Prophet*, to teach his Church; of a *Prieſt*, to make Reconciliation, and intercede for it; and of a *King*, to Govern and Protect it.

Queſt. Why do you call ſuch Inveſtiture, his *Anointing*?

Anſw. Becauſe anciently Inveſtitures into theſe Offices, were, according to the *Eaſtern* Cuſtom, by pouring Oyl upon them: as in the caſe of the *Arch-Prophet Eliſha*, 1 *Kings* 19. 16. and *High-Prieſt Aaron*, *Lev.* 8. 12. And in *Kings*, as the *Jewiſh* Doctors note, when they received not their Office and Authority by Succeſſion, but by extraordinary Deſignation; as in the caſe of King *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 9. 16. & 10. 1. and King *David*, 1 *Sam.* 16. 13. Anſwerable to which, *Meſſiah*'s Deſignation to his Office, which was to include all theſe, is call'd his *being Anointed*, Iſa. 61. 1, 2, 3.

Queſt. Was *Chriſt* inveſted in theſe Offices, by pouring Oyl upon him?

Anſw. No, but by pouring a nobler thing, the miraculous Powers and Gifts of the *Holy Ghoſt*, which inſtall'd him, and anſwer'd to their anointing. *God anointed Jeſus with the Holy Ghoſt, and with Power*, Acts 10. 38.

Queſt. Was *Chriſt* in the Office and Quality of a *Prophet*, to teach his Church?

Anſw. Yes, *he was a Teacher ſent from God*, John 3. 2. *What he ſaid, he ſpake not of himſelf, but as the Father gave him Commandment, ſo he ſpake*, John 12. 49, 50. So that the People ſpoke a great truth, when they ſaid, *This is of a truth that Prophet, who was to come into the World*, John 6. 14. Nay, he was not in the rank of an ordinary Prophet, but in a pitch of Eminence, far above all others. For he not only had a Prophetick Spirit reſting always on him, which the beſt of them enjoy'd but on certain times and occaſions; but he knew the will of God by Perſonal Acquaintance, and immediate intuition, not barely at ſecond hand, by the *Meſſage of an Angel*, or by a *Viſion*, or a *Dream*, as they all did. *The only begotten Son, who is in the boſom of the Father, he hath declared him*, John 1. 18. And on this account, among others, of all *Prophets* and Interpreters of God's mind, he alone is call'd *the Word*; becauſe, lying in God's Boſom, he had his mind without any thing intervening, as immediately, as a word expreſſes ones meaning.

Queſt. What muſt this teach us?

Anſw. Whenſoever we would know the mind of God, to ſeek only unto him; and never to hearken to any other New Lights, or Enthuſiaſtical Pretenders. In all times, both in the *Apoſtles* days, and ours, ſeveral Impoſtors, and falſe Prophets, have come with pretended Meſſages, to ſhew men the will of God, and the way to Happineſs.

But

But we are to give ear to none of theſe, this work of communicating God's mind to men, not being left at random, but peculiarly intruſted with *Jeſus Chriſt*, that great Prophet of the Church, who is eſpecially conſtituted by God, and anointed for this purpoſe. *This is my beloved Son*, ſaid God *in the voice from the bright Cloud, in whom I am well pleaſed, hear ye him*, Mat. 17. 5.

Queſt. But how ſhall we do to learn of him, ſince now he is no more among us here on Earth, but is gone to Heaven?

Anſw. Two ways he exerciſes his *Prophetick* Office to communicate the mind of God to us.

1. By the *Scriptures*. What God told him, he firſt by Perſonal Converſe, and afterwards by † *his Spirit leading them into all truth*, told the *Apoſtles* and *Evangeliſts*: and they put it in writing, in the Book call'd the *Holy Scriptures*, to be preached and publiſhed to all others, thro' all times. So that when we hear them read, we muſt think we hear *Chriſt* our great *Prophet* ſpeaking to us. And to be debarr'd, or debar our ſelves of the uſe of them, what is it, but to be debarr'd of this great Prophet's free Communication? † Joh. 16. 13.

2. By his *Miniſters*, whom he has left and appointed to declare God's mind to the People in his place. Thus the *Prieſts* were appointed among the *Jews*: *The Prieſts lips ſhould preſerve Knowledge, and the People ſhould*

ſeek the Law at his mouth; for he is the Meſſenger of the Lord of Hoſts, Mal. 2. 7. And ſo are *the Miniſters of Chriſt*, among us *Chriſtians*. *Loe! I am with you, teaching them all things whatſoever I have commanded*, and that *always, even to the end of the World*. That is, with you during your own lives, and the Paſtors and Teachers your Succeſſors, for ever after your deaths, *Mat.* 28. 20. So that if we would give ear to *Chriſt*, and own him for the *Prophet* of the Church, we muſt ſeek the mind of God from the Holy Scriptures, and from the mouths of our Biſhops and Paſtors, who are his eſtabliſhed Miniſters, to inculcate and explain thoſe Scriptures.

Queſt. Another Office you ſay he was deſign'd and anointed to, was the Office of a *Prieſt*. Wherein doth that conſiſt?

Anſw. In two things. 1. The *payment of a Price*, to make Reconciliation, and expiate mens ſins with God. And 2. *Interceding* for ever after, that they ſhould have the benefit and bleſſing of it. A *Prophet* is employ'd from God to men, to declare his will and pleaſure to them. But a *Prieſt* is employ'd from men to God, ordain'd, as St. *Paul* ſays, *for men in things pertaining to God*, Heb. 5. 1. So that a *Prieſt* ſtands for the Church, to make Reconciliation, and intercede for it.

Queſt. And did *Chriſt* act the part of a *Prieſt* for the Church, paying a Price to make Reconciliation with God, and in virtue

virtue of that to intercede for it?

Anſw. Yes, he reconciled us to God, by dying in our ſtead. *We are reconciled to God, by the death of his Son*: Rom. 5. 10. And being now raiſed from the Dead, he is *entred into Heaven, where he ever lives to make interceſſion for us*: Heb. 7. 25.

Queſt. Doth he intercede, that men may have this Reconciliation, whilſt they go on in ſin?

Anſw. No, but only when they forſake it, and *Repent, that their ſins may be blotted out*, Act. 3. 19. So that till they amend, they muſt never expect that he ſhould move for them.

Queſt. What doth the conſideration of *Chriſt's* Prieſthood teach us?

Anſw. To hope for the Mercy of God for our ſins, upon our true Repentance. *If any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the Righteous, who is the Propitiation for our ſins*, 1 Joh. 2. 1, 2. And having *him our High-Prieſt, we may draw near with full aſſurance of Faith*, if once *our Hearts are ſprinkled*, and cleanſed *from an evil Conſcience*, Heb. 10. 21, 22. And in general, it teaches us, whenſoever we want any Mercy or Favour from God, to apply to him by *Jeſus Chriſt*, who is anointed to be the ſole Interceſſor, or Great Maſter of Requeſts, from whom he will receive our Prayers.

Queſt. You ſaid, *thirdly*, that *Chriſt* was inveſted with the Office of a *King*

to his Church, what doth that imply?

Anſw. *Two* things. 1. That he *govern* it by his Laws, and Officers, the *Biſhops* and *Paſtors*. 2. That he *protect* it from all viſible and inviſible Enemies, by his *Spirit* and *Providence*. And both theſe Parts of *Regal Power*, *Chriſt* exerciſes over his Church. *He is our Lord to command, the Head over all things to his Body, which is the Church*, Eph. 1. 22, 23. and ſits now as a Protector *at God's Right-hand, till his Enemies be made his Foot-ſtool*, Pſal. 110. 1.

Queſt. 'Tis plain he exerciſes his Kingly Power of Governing us, by his Laws, which are contain'd in the holy *Scriptures*. But doth he alſo govern his Church by his *Officers*, *viz.* the *Biſhops* and *Miniſters*, making them his Deputies here on Earth?

Anſw. Yes, for they are called *his Paſtors*, Eph. 4. 8, 11. which is the Scriptural word for Governours, to *feed*, and to *rule*, being uſed promiſcuouſly in the holy Language. *That ſaith of* Cyrus, *he is my Shepherd*; that is, my Deputy in Power, or Subſtitute in Government *Iſa* 44. 28. And God *brought* David *to feed* Jacob *his people, and* Iſrael *his inheritance*; that is, to Rule them: *So he fed them according to the Integrity of his Heart, and guided them according to the skilfulneſs of his Hand.* Pſal 78. 71, 72. His Miniſters are his Subſtitutes in Government, whom we are to hearken to, and obey in his place. *Know them that are over you in the Lord, and admoniſh you*;

1 Theſſ.

1 Theſſ. 5. 12, 13. and *obey thoſe that have the rule you, for they watch for your Souls*; Heb. 13. 17.

Queſt. What muſt this teach us?

Anſw. To ſubmit to our own Biſhops and Miniſters, acting for, and under him, as we would to *Chriſt* himſelf, if we would own him to be King over us. For they are his Deputies, to Rule the Church in his place. And whilſt they act according to his Commiſſion, he Decrees and Sentences, Binds and Looſes, Speaks and Acts by them; as every Royal Prince doth by his Repreſentatives and Miniſters, in all Authoritative Acts, whereto they are commiſſion'd by him, which, when done by them, have the ſame Authority and Force, as if performed by himſelf in Perſon. And therefore if we reject them in ſuch caſes, we ſhew that we will not have him to Reign over us, *He that heareth you, heareth me: and he that deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me*, Luk. 10. 16. And accordingly St. *Paul*, both in *binding* and *looſing*, declares, he acted *in the perſon of Chriſt*, 2 Cor. 2. 10. and commends the *Galatians*, *for receiving him as Chriſt Jeſus*, Gal. 4. 14.

Queſt. And wherein muſt we ſhew this Submiſſion?

Anſw. In uniting with them in Prayers, and Sacraments; they having the charge of miniſtring in his Worſhip and Service, and what he ſolemnly and openly receives in his Princely Dependancies, being from the

the Mouths and Mediation of his own Stewards and Officers. In hearkening to their Godly Admonitions, becauſe he has left them to inſtruct, and rebuke Sinners. In meekly undergoing their deſerved Cenſures, and ſeeking again the Peace of the Church by true Repentance. And, laſtly, in chearfully conforming to all their Church-Laws and Conſtitutions, when they do not thwart, or oppoſe his. *Chriſt* himſelf, our Soveraign Lord and King, has given Laws for all neceſſary things; but has left them to regulate Rites and Ceremonies, which are variable matters, and to take care of the Order and Decency of Worſhip, in the publick Aſſemblies. *Let every thing be done decently, and in order in the Church*, 1 Cor. 14. 40; is a Precept given to Church-Governours, for they have the care of God's Publick Service. And when they make any innocent, or uſeful Appointments in theſe things, we muſt cheerfully obey and conform our ſelves. *Obey them that have the Rule or Guidance over you, for they watch for your Souls*, Heb. 13. 17.

Queſt. Is it another part of his Kingly Power, to *protect* his Church from all viſible and inviſible Enemies?

Anſw. Yes, he guards it againſt all *inward*, and inviſible Enemies, by his *Spirit*; and from all *outward*, and viſible Enemies, by his *Providence*. But the ſecurity he gives againſt theſe, is not that it ſhall never be eclipſed

eclipſed and perſecuted, but only that it ſhall never be deſtroyed by them. The Promiſe is, That *the Gates of Hell*, that is, the Powers of *Satan*, and all his wicked inſtruments, *ſhall not prevail againſt the Church*, Matt. 16. 18.

Queſt. What muſt *Chriſt's* protecting his Church teach us?

Anſw. To truſt him with Religion, and not ſin to ſave it in the moſt perillous times. He is more concern'd for his Church, than any of us are, or can be; and he knows how to protect it, without the help of our ſins, or our acting wickedly for it. So that in all ſuch times, we are to practiſe Religion, and do our duty; and then recommend, and truſt the Preſervation of it to his care.

Queſt. If we would own *Chriſt* as our King, then, I perceive, we muſt obey his Laws and Miniſters, and commit our ſelves to him in well-doing, as the Protector of his Church?

Anſw. Yes.

Queſt. And will none partake of the Reconciliation of his Prieſthood, but they who thus believe him as their Prophet, and obey him as their Lord?

Anſw. No, for Faith and Obedience are neceſſary to our Peace with God; and there is no injoying the benefit of one, without embracing him in all his Offices.

Queſt. To *believe in Chriſt* then, or to acknowledge *Jeſus to be the Chriſt*, is to own

own him for the Prophet of the Church, by hearkning to his Word and Miniſters; for the Prieſt of God, by hoping in him, and applying to God by him, for Reconciliation, and all other mercies; and for the King of his Church, by obeying both his Laws and Officers, and in a courſe of well-doing, truſting both our ſelves and our Religion, to his Protection here on Earth.

Anſw. Yes.

Queſt. What is meant by that, which follows in the Creed, his being *God's only Son?*

Anſw. Our meaning is, in reſpect of his *Nature*, that God begat him, as a Father doth a Son, of like nature with himſelf, ſo that he is God as well as Man. For *he is equal with God*, Phil. 2. 6. *The true God*; 1 Joh. 5. 20. and *over all, God bleſſed for ever*, Rom. 9. 5. Which laſt was the ſpecial Character and Title of the true God, in the common ſtile and expreſſion of the *Jews*. Who, from their Cuſtom, when the Prieſt in the Sanctuary rehearſed the Name of God, of anſwering, *Bleſſed be his name for ever*, came in their common ſpeech to call him, *The Bleſſed One*; which phraſe, the Scriptures often denote him, as in *Mar.* 14. 61. 2 *Cor.* 11. 31. *Rom.* 1. 25.

† *Jo.* 1. 3. * *Heb.* 1. 3. † *Heb.* 1. 6. * 1 *Cor.* 1. 2. † *Mat.* 28. 16.

And, agreeable to his having this Divine Nature, we find the Divine Works, as † Creating, and * Suſtaining; and Divine Honours, as † *Worſhip*, and * *Prayers*, and † *Baptiſm in the Name of the Son*, as well as

of

of the *Father*, aſcribed to him in Holy Scripture.

Queſt. Why was it requiſite our Redeemer ſhould be God?

Anſw. 1. To give Merit to his Sacrifice, which was infinitely advanced, in regard his Blood was *the Blood of God*, Act. 20. 28. *How much more ſhall the Blood of Chriſt purge your Conſciences, who offered himſelf thro' the eternal Spirit*, Heb. 9. 14. As its being committed againſt God, was the extreme aggravation of our ſin: So muſt its being performed by God, be equally an enhanſement of his Reparation. 2. To ſeveral other purpoſes, as to his having Power enough to conquer Death and Hell, and ſave us from all our Spiritual Enemies, to fit him for a capable and competent Judge of all men, ſeeing into their Hearts and Thoughts, which is one of God's Prerogatives. To recommend Vertue as much as was poſſible by an example ſince in him it appears, that all the things required of us, are worthy of the moſt excellent Natures; yea, are not below the practice of God himſelf.

Queſt. What other meaning is there of it?

Anſw. Another is in reſpect of his *Power*, becauſe he is inveſted with all the Authority and Power of God. For *Son of God*, ſignifies ſometimes the ſame as *the Chriſt*; that is, one whom God hath commiſſioned to act in his ſtead. *He ſhall be great, and*

the

the Son of the Higheſt, and God ſhall give him the Throne of his Father David, Luk. 1. 32. And thus *Jeſus Chriſt* is God's Son; for *he hath given him all Power, both in Heaven and Earth*, Matt. 28. 18. and *committed all Authority to the Son, that all ſhould honour the Son, as they honour the Father*, Joh. 5. 22, 23.

Queſt. And being *the Son of God* in this ſenſe; that is, having Soveraign Power from him, he is our Lord?

Anſw. Yes, in reſpect of this derived Power, and of his own Soveraign Divine Nature, of his invaluable Merit and Purchace, and of our voluntary Compacts and Submiſſions: on all accounts, that can found a juſt Dominion, and Lordſhip over us: *God has given him a Name above every Name, that every Tongue ſhould confeſs, Jeſus Chriſt is Lord*, Phil. 2. 9, 11. *To us there is one Lord*, 1 Cor. 8. 6.

Queſt. And being God, not only in Power, but alſo in Nature, muſt we not all worſhip him, and pray to him, and truſt in him as God?

Anſw. Yes, for *at the Name of Jeſus every Knee ſhall bow*, Phil. 2. 10: and *all muſt honour the Son, as they honour the Father*, Joh. 5. 23. This is done by all good Chriſtians, and Saints on Earth, who are ſtyled, They *that call upon the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 1. 2. And alſo by thoſe, who are glorified in Heaven, who *ſing their Hallelujah's*, as to God the Father, ſo alſo to *the Lamb*, Rev. 5. 11, 12, 13, 14. Yea,

by the *Angels* too, *for when he bringeth his firſt-begotten into the world, he ſaith, and let all the Angels of God worſhip him*, Heb. 1. 6. And this Divine Honour, if he were not a God in Nature, as well as in Power, he could never claim, nor receive from them.

Queſt. If *Chriſt* is our Rightful, Sovereign Lord, then we muſt give up our Wills to his, and perform faithfully whatſoever he orders?

Anſw. Yes, *Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I ſay*, Luk. 6. 46. Nay, ſince he is *our Lord*, and we are his *Houſhold-Servants*, we muſt not, as he ſays, *be the Servants of Men*; that is, ſo wholly given up to their Service, as that we cannot mind his; or ſerve their pleaſure, when it interferes with his Laws; or comply with their Meen and Cuſtoms, when they are contrary unto his; or ſooth and flatter their weak Minds, and feed their ſickly Humours, like timerous or mercenary Slaves. *No man*, ſays our Saviour, *can* thus *ſerve two Maſters*, Matt. 6. 24. *Ye are bought with a price*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *be not ye therefore the Servants of men*, 1 Cor. 7. 23. And *if I yet pleaſed* or ſoothed up *men*, *I ſhould not be the Servant of Chriſt*, Gal. 1. 10.

Queſt. Since he is our Lord, we ſhould not think any thing too mean, or ill for us, which he thought not ſo for him, but compoſe our ſelves to his Behaviour, willingly following where he has gone before; it being

being a ſhame for a Servant to be more nice and delicate, and more hard to pleaſe, than his Maſter?

Anſw. Very right. And accordingly he preſſes us on to thoſe Duties, which otherwiſe we ſhould be moſt like to diſdain and grumble at, by putting us in mind, how he has done, or undergone the ſame himſelf. *If I, your Lord and Maſter, have waſhed your feet, ye ought alſo to waſh one anothers feet*, Joh. 13. 14. If men *give you hard names*, be content, they have done the ſame to me; and *the Diſciple is not above his Maſter, nor the Servant above his Lord; 'tis enough for the Diſciple, that he be as his Maſter, and the Servant as his Lord*, Matt. 10. 24, 25. He that *would be greateſt amongſt you*, ſaith he again, *let him miniſter moſt*, and ſtrive to be moſt uſeful, *as he that ſerveth; for I am among you as he that ſerveth*, Luk. 22. 26, 27. *Be patient*, when you *are perſecuted, remembring what I ſaid unto you, that the Servant is not greater than his Lord.* Joh. 15. 20. Thus muſt we ſpurn at no condeſcenſions, or labours of Love and Service: no, nor at Reproaches for well-doing, or ſuffering in God's Cauſe; ſince thereby we only wear our Lord's Livery, nay, are made like to him, and follow his ſteps, where he has led the way before us.

Queſt. Since he is the common Lord, both of Maſters and Servants, muſt not this teach us great Moderation and Equity towards our Servants and Dependants, who, however

ever inferior and ſubject they may be in Humane Reſpects, are yet equally near to him, and *Brethren* and *Fellow-ſervants* in reſpect of his Dominion?

Anſw. Yes. God would not permit the *Jews*, to make any of their Brethren Slaves, tho' they might uſe them as Fellow-ſervants, becauſe they were all his Servants. *They are my Servants, which I brought forth out of the Land of Egypt, they ſhall not be ſold as Bondmen*, Lev. 25. 42. And *give unto your Servants that which is juſt and equal*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *knowing, that ye alſo have a Maſter in Heaven*, Col. 4. 1.

Queſt. What is the *third* Article of the *Creed?*

Anſw. Who was conceived by the Holy Ghoſt, born of the Virgin Mary.

Queſt. Why muſt *Chriſt*, out of the Natural Courſe of Generation, be born of a Virgin? And why muſt the *Holy Ghoſt* beget him?

Anſw. Becauſe he was to be undefiled from the Womb, and fit to ſatisfie for the ſins of others, having none of his own. *For ſuch an High-Prieſt became us, as was Holy, Undefiled, ſeperate from Sinners*; Heb. 7. 26.

Queſt. Was *Chriſt* truly man?

Anſw. Yes, he underwent all the wants of our Natures, for he was hungry, weary, and ſleepy, as we are. And all the Infirmities, for he wept, and was ſorrowful, troubled, and ſore amazed; *He was in all*

points tempted as we are, only without sin, Heb. 4. 15.

Quest. Having felt them thus in himself, will he not be apt to sympathize, and have compassion on all our weaknesses?

Answ. Yes, thereupon the *Apostle* argues him to be *soon touched with the feeling of our infirmities*, Heb. 4. 15.

Quest. Why was it requisite, that to redeem us, the Son of God should become Man?

Answ. To fit him, 1. To attone and appease God, that Man might gain what Man had lost, and that by his performing Obedience, he might be capable to restore what Disobedience had forfeited. *As by one man's Disobedience many were made Sinners, so by the Obedience of one, were many to be made Righteous*, Rom. 5. 19. And *we having Flesh and Blood, he also took part of the same, that through death, he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil*, Heb. 2. 14.

2. To be Gentle and Compassionate towards us, affectionately interceding for us, and reasonably bearing with our infirmities. *It behoved him in all things to be like unto his Brethren, that he might be a merciful, and faithful High-Priest*, Heb. 2. 17.

Quest. How was his becoming man, necessary to give him a knowledge and compassionate sense of our infirmities; was he not God before? And doth not God, who made our Frame, know our infirmities better, than we who feel them? *Answ.*

Anſw. Yes, he doth, but on other accounts, as the appeaſing God, becauſe not God, but only Man could ſuffer, and ſatisfie; and man's Obedience was fitteſt to regain what man's Diſobedience had loſt; and it would be moſt eaſie, and favourable to us, that he, who ſhould give Laws to us, and judge us at the laſt, ſhould be a man like our ſelves; it was requiſite the Mediator ſhould be man. And when he was ſo, to make not only his Divinity, that made our Frame, but his Humane Nature too, in which he tranſacts with us, compaſſionate to the utmoſt of our infirmities, 'twas requiſite he ſhould feel them in himſelf; ſince there is no way to make men ſo ſenſible of any infirmities, as their feeling them by ſorrowful experience.

Queſt. What muſt we learn from this Condeſcention of the Son of God?

Anſw. To be humble, and not contemn the pooreſt and meaneſt ſtate, ſince he has dignified it with his Appearance in it. To be Charitable, and Condeſcenſive, and think nothing below us, whereby we may do good. To be content in any ſtate, which God allots for us, thinking the greateſt meaſure of his Love and Tenderneſs, conſiſtent with the greateſt meanneſs of our outward ſtate and circumſtances, as it plainly was in his Son's caſe. Laſtly, To think all wickedneſs, utterly unworthy of our Nature, ſince now God has ſo marvellouſly united it to his own. Theſe, and

ſuch like things, we muſt learn and practiſe from it, if we would be his followers, and ſhew *the ſame mind to be in us, which was before in Chriſt Jeſus*, Phil. 2. 3, 4, 5.

Queſt. Why muſt he be both God and Man, in one Perſon?

Anſw. To fit him for the Office of a Mediator, and Reconciler: who was to go between them, and make them both one. For it was fit he ſhould be nearly allied to each Party, and have intereſt in both of them.

CHAP. II.

Of the Sufferings of Chriſt.

The Contents.

An Account of what Chriſt ſuffer'd, and from whom. Both he, and God the Father were conſenting to it. What he ſuffer'd, was for our ſins, to ſave us from ſuffering for them, when we truly repent of them. Pardon on Repentance, the deſign of his Satisfaction, and the Merit of his Death. This is a Free Grace, which implies that it is not given in Recompence of our Deſerts, not that it requires no Conditions. An Account why God would not grant this Grace of Pardon to Penitents, without Chriſt's dying to ſatisfie for them. And how his Death ſerv'd all the deſigns of God's Juſtice, full as well,

as

as their own would have done. Chriſt's Sacrifice but once offered, but daily commemorated. Several uſeful inferences from Chriſt's dying for us. Chriſt's dead Body was buried. Of his deſcent into Hell.

Queſt. WHat is the *Fourth* Article in the *Creed?*

Anſw. Suffered under Pontius Pilate, *was crucified, dead, and buried; he deſcended into Hell.*

Queſt. What did *Chriſt* ſuffer?

Anſw. Beſides his previous Sufferings, particularly *in the Garden*, where the wrath of God was ſtrongly repreſented, and Hell let looſe upon him, under which 'tis ſaid, he was *exceeding ſorrowful, even unto death*, Mat. 26. 37, 38. and thrown into *an Agony, wherein he ſweat great drops of Blood*, Luke 22. 44. Beſides theſe previous Sufferings, I ſay, he ſuffered alſo after his Apprehenſion all manner of rudeneſs from the inraged *Rabble* and *Soldiery*, who *mocked him*, † *ſpit upon him, buffeted*, and *ſcourged* him; bound his Head about with a * *wreath of ſharp Thorns*, which every where like Darts pierced his tender fleſh; and at laſt, nail'd his Hands and Feet to a Croſs, a moſt acute and lingring Death: and to make that moſt ignominious Suffering more ignominious ſtill, hung him *in the midſt between* † *two Thieves.*

† Mat. 27. 26. 30, 31.
* ver. 29.
† Luk. 23. 33.

Queſt. Who were the Executioners of all theſe Cruelties?

Answ. The *Jewish* Rulers and People went as far in it as they could. But because the *Romans*, who had conquer'd them, had not left among them, as they say, *any Power* and Authority *to put any man to death*, Joh. 18. 31. they drew in *Pontius Pilate*, the *Roman Governour*, to sentence his Crucifixion, against his Conscience.

Quest. Did not *Pilate* believe *Christ* to deserve all this?

Answ. No; *he knew they had delivered him for envy*, and malice, *Matt.* 27. 18. He declared he was a *just person*, *Matt.* 27. 24. and that *upon examination*, *he found no fault at all in him*, Luk. 23. 4, 14. No, nor yet *Herod*, when *he sent* him to be judged *by him*, v. 15. But because by their importunity *a tumult was made*, he yielded to pass sentence against him for his own quiet, *Matt.* 27. 24. and *to content the people*, whom he durst not offend, *Mar.* 15. 15. *Luk.* 23. 23, 24.

Quest. What need had he to fear them, that such an abject fear should betray him into so unjust, and vile an Action?

Answ He had incensed them, and made himself obnoxious to be articled against, by his former violences, being a man very Cruel and Tyrannical, for which, on the complaint of the *Samaritan Jews*, he was presently after removed, as † *Josephus* reports. And in this case, they terrified him moreover, by threatning to accuse him to his jealous Governour, *Tiberius Cæsar*, as no friend to him, for *letting Christ go*, *who called*

† *Antiqu. l.* 18. 5.

called himself a King, which, they said, was *speaking against* Cæsar, *Joh.* 19. 12.

Quest. Christ did testify, indeed, before *Pilate*, that he *was a King*, and that *for this end he came into the World, that he should bear witness of this Truth*, Joh. 18. 37. And did not this give *Cæsar* just cause to be afraid of him?

Answ. No, because, as he declared, *his Kingdom was not of this World, neither should his Servants fight* for him, as the Subjects of worldly Princes do for them, *Joh.* 18. 36. so that he would take nothing from the Emperor, nor pretend to thwart him, or resist his just Power. But his Kingdom was in relation to another World, a Spiritual Kingdom, set up in men's Hearts, and administred by the expectation of future Rewards and Punishments, leaving Princes still to govern as they did in all the Affairs of this life. And this did not intrench any thing upon the Prerogatives of the present Powers, whom he left all in the same Authority, and their Subjects under the same Duty, as he found them. As *Pilate* plainly perceiv'd by *Christ's* Answer, wherewith he was satisfied, and pronounced him innocent upon it.

Quest. These Sufferings of *Christ* you mention, were most barbarous and horrible things. But amidst all these bodily Tortures, had he not ease within, and great support of inward spiritual Comforts; as he afforded the *Martyrs* and *Confessors* afterwards in theirs?

Answ. No, the Horrours of his Mind were beyond the Anguish of his Body, as if he were design'd to suffer the extremity of what Nature could bear. *His Soul was troubled*, Joh. 12. 27. *very heavy*, Mat. 26. 37. *Sore amazed*, Mark 14. 33. *Exceeding sorrowful, even unto death*, Mat. 26. 38. and in such an *Agony*, as I noted, at the apprehension of the Divine Wrath he was conflicting with, as put a most unwonted force upon Nature, and made him *sweat as it were great drops of Blood*, Luk. 22. 44. Under all which, he was so over-born with the Burden, that he needed *an Angel to be sent to strengthen him*, v. 43.

Quest. Could *Christ* have avoided these Sufferings, if he would?

Answ. Yes, he could have had *Legions of Angels* for his Rescue, *Matt.* 26. 53. But for our sakes, he voluntarily submitted to them. *I have power to lay down my life, and to take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of my self*, Joh. 10. 18.

Quest. And was God consenting to them?

Answ. Yes, they came about, not only by his Permission, but by his Counsel and Determination. He did no ways excite the *Jews* to this abominable Act; but left them to their own envy and malice, which were more than enough to push them forward. But when they of themselves were wicked enough to do it, he, by his infinite Wisdom, accomplishes what his Son and he had before agreed, *viz.* the working our Redemption

demption by it. He ſuffered according to *what was determined*, Luk. 22. 22. He was *delivered* to them, *by the determinate Counſel and Foreknowledge of God*, Acts 2. 23. *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate* did only *what his Hand, and Counſel had determined before to be done*, Act. 4. 28. And he *was a Lamb fore-ordain'd to be ſlain, before the foundation of the World*, 1 Pet. 1. 19, 20. His death, and his exaltation therefore to be a *Mediatory King*, and our *Redeemer*, was a Bargain driven, and a Matter concerted long before betwixt him, and his heavenly Father. *My Father hath appointed*, (the word is † covenanted) *to me a Kingdom*, † נכרת. that is, in the everlaſting agreement between God and him, it was promiſed as the Reward of his undertaking, *Luk.* 22. 29. And on this account, his Servants are ſaid to be given to him as a Retribution: *He gave himſelf for them*; that is, to purchaſe them, *Tit.* 2. 14. *Thine they were*, ſays he to his *Father, and thou gaveſt them me*; that is, on this conſideration, *Joh.* 17. 4, 6.

Queſt. But ſince the things he endured, were the abſolute perfection of ſhame and ſorrow, why ſhould *Chriſt* ſubmit, or God bring *Chriſt* to that end? was it to puniſh his own ſins?

Anſw. No, *he did no ſin*, 1 Pet. 2. 22. *He was tempted in all points* of Natural Infirmities as we are, *but yet without ſin*, Heb. 4. 15.

Queſt.

Queſt. For whoſe ſins was it then; for all *death is the wages of ſin*, *Rom.* 6. 23?

Anſw. For ours, for we had ſinned, and were all to die; but he comes by the Allowance of God, and bears our iniquity, by dying in our place. *God laid on him the iniquities of us all*, Iſa. 53. 6. *He taſted death for every man*, Heb. 2. 9. *He died for our ſins*, 1 Cor. 15. 3. *He poured out his Soul a Sin-Offering*, Iſa. 53. 5, 10.

Queſt. What are we the better for his dying for them?

Anſw. Infinitely the better every way; but particularly, his death will ſave us from dying for them, if we truly repent of them. *He hath redeemed us from the Curſe of the Law*, by *being made a Curſe*; that is, enduring a curſed death, *for us*, Gal. 3. 13. 2 Cor. 5. 21. He *bought us off* from death by *dying for us*; whence he is called our *Redeemer*, and our *Ranſom*, 1 Tim. 2. 6.

Queſt. But has not his death bought us off from the Puniſhment of our Sins, till we repent of them?

Anſw. No, for we muſt *Repent, and be converted, that our ſins may be blotted out* for his ſake, *Acts* 3. 19. *and being made perfect*; that is, inaugurated into his Princely Power, *by ſuffering, he became the Author of Eternal Salvation to all them that obey him*, Heb. 5. 9.

Queſt. If men remain impenitent then, they muſt die for their own ſins, I perceive, notwithſtanding?

Anſw.

Anſw. Yes, *Except they repent, they muſt all periſh*, Luk. 13. 3.

Queſt. But ſince *Chriſt* hath died for them once already, will not that be dying twice, and ſo being twice puniſhed for the ſame ſin?

Anſw. No, for he profered, and God accepted his death, not as an unlimited exchange for all Sinners, but only for thoſe, who will leave their ſins, and repent of them. He died, indeed, *for all men*: but he died as *their Sacrifice*, Eph. 5. 2. and Sacrifices were accepted in lieu only of Penitent Offenders; and as God ſtill told the *Jews*, would never put away ſins, without the Repentance of thoſe they were offered for. *To what purpoſe is the number of your Sacrifices?* ſaid he to thoſe who went on ſtill in their wickedneſs, *Iſa.* 1. 11. *The Sacrifice of God is a broken Spirit*; that is, the Sacrifice God accepts muſt be accompanied with it; *a broken, and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not deſpiſe*, Pſal. 51. 17.

Queſt. But was not his death a ſatisfaction for ſins? And if he has ſatisfied for them already, what need we do more? muſt we ſatisfie for them again?

Anſw. All the fruit, and eſtimate of his Satisfaction, muſt be taken from the Argument between God and him. His death, who was an innocent man, would have ſignified nothing at all towards our releaſe, unleſs God had been graciouſly pleaſed to admit

admit of him in commutation, and exchange for our Suffering. It avails, and operates nothing by it ſelf alone, but only ſo far, as God accepted him. And the nature and effect of his Satisfaction, as it was joyntly deſigned and concerted between his Father and him, was not, that no ſinner whatſoever ſhould be accountable for his own ſins, but only that none ſhould, who had repented of them.

Queſt. What then were his merits, or that which he deſerved, and obtained of God for us, by his death?

Anſw. The *Grace and Favour of Repentance*, or, that if we truly repent, we ſhall not die for our ſelves. So St. *Peter* expreſſes that benefit, the *Gentiles* had received, in being admitted Chriſtians: *then hath God alſo to the Gentiles, granted Repentance unto life*, Acts 11. 18. And again, *God exalted him to be a Saviour, to give Repentance unto Iſrael, and remiſſion of ſins*, Acts 5. 31. So that the merit of *Chriſt's* death is the Pardon of all our ſins on true Repentance, and likewiſe the Grace to enable us thus to repent of them.

Queſt. Is this Pardon on Repentance a Grace and Favour, which we needed him to purchaſe for us?

Anſw. Yes, for the Law of Works, which condemned us all, was, *Do this, and live*; not, as thro' *Chriſt* the *Goſpel* is, *either do it, or repent where you fail.* So that God was not bound to pardon Sinners, when they did

did repent. Nay, the Honour of his Holineſs and Juſtice, the maintaining the Authority of his Laws, and the ſeriouſneſs and veracity of his threatnings, were ready to interpoſe, and hinder him from doing it. But when *Chriſt* came to die in our ſtead, and pay his own Blood, as a price to induce God pardon Penitents: Then, ſince he doth it not without ſuch a valuable Recompence, he might pardon them, without any Reflection on thoſe glorious Attributes. And this is the fruit of his Satisfaction, and the Merit and Purchaſe of his Death, *viz.* the *Favour of Pardon of ſin upon Repentance.*

Queſt. Is there no other Merit, and Fruit of *Chriſt's* Death?

Anſw. Yes, beſides the forgiveneſs of ſin, and the gift of Eternal Life thereupon, he has alſo merited, as I ſaid, the Grace to cure it. But this is ſo much favour and indulgence, as he ever ſought, or has procured of God, towards the pardon of it.

Queſt. But if we cannot partake of the benefit of his death, but upon theſe terms, how is all the favour we receive by it, ſaid to come *freely*, and to be of *free Grace*?

Anſw. Grace may be called *Free*, on *two* accounts; either, as it is not given us *for our deſerts*; or, as it is not given *upon any conditions.*

Queſt. Is the Grace of God free, in the *firſt* ſenſe, as that excludes all *Merits*, or ſo free, as not to be given us for our deſerts?

Anſw.

Answ. Yes, and this is the *Scripture*-sense of Free-Grace; for there *Free-Grace* is the same as *Undeserved-Grace.*

Quest. How doth that appear?

Answ. Because *Free-Grace* is there opposed to *Boasting*, which has place only on the Plea of Merit or desert. *We are justified freely by his Grace, then where is Boasting? it is thereby excluded*, Rom. 3. 24, 27. And *by Grace ye are saved, not of works*, i. e. by the desert of any works, *lest any man should boast*, Eph. 2. 8, 9.

Quest. If the *Scripture* had been silent, 'tis easie to apprehend this Grace must needs be undeserved by us, because all we can do, is by the help of his Spirit, and is but his just due, which we do not give, but pay as Debters; and were it our own, it is yet defective and mean, and utterly unworthy of so vast a Recompence. But tho' it be thus absolutely undeserved by us, yet has not *Christ* fully merited and deserved it for us?

Answ. Yes, he was bound to nothing, but voluntarily subjected himself to the Law, and took our Nature upon him. All the perfect Obedience he shewed, either in doing or suffering the Will of God, was his free and gratuitous Offering; and was good in the highest degree and perfection; and received an infinite estimate, from the Divinity of his Person; and gratified the Father, in his greatest designs, for his own Glory, and mens Salvation. So that by his

his Services, so free and gratuitous in themselves, and so worthy of the most infinite Recompence, he has justly merited all that Grace, which, for his sake, God bestows on us.

Quest. The Grace of the Gospel, I see, is absolutely free to us in the *first* sense; that is, it comes to us without the least of *our deserts.* But it is also free in the *second*, so as not to require in us any *Terms* or *Conditions*?

Answ. No, for the main instances of God's Grace; that is, of his gratuitous, and undeserved Gifts, are the *forgiveness of sins*, the *saving assistances of his Spirit*, and *Eternal Life:* And all these are given, tho' not for any of our Deserts, yet upon Conditions.

Quest. Is *forgiveness of sins*, one instance of God's Free Grace?

Answ. Yes, *we are justified*, that is, acquitted in judgment, or have our sins pardon'd, *freely by his Grace*, Rom. 3. 24. and *we have forgiveness, according to the riches of his Grace*, Eph. 1. 7.

Quest. And this Grace of Forgiveness, you say, is granted to us on Conditions?

Answ. Yes, on Condition of our *true Repentance.* For we are to *Repent, that our sins may be blotted out*, Act. 3. 19. And *Christ was exalted to be a Saviour, to give Repentance and Remission of sins*, Act. 5. 31. And when he sends out his *Apostles* to publish this Grace, he orders them to *preach Repentance, and*

and Remission of sins in his Name, to all Nations, Luk 24. 47.

Quest. The *saving Assistance of God's holy Spirit*, is another eminent instance of Grace, and is most commonly called so in common speech; but is that given too upon Conditions?

Answ. Yes, on condition of our own care, and concurrent endeavours. For tho' the first motions and suggestions of the Spirit, which make the first step in our Conversion, may prevent our endeavours: yet the continuance of them on our Hearts, and their encrease to a saving pitch, that will govern our Lives, and guard us against Temptations, depends upon our own Concurrence. *To him that hath*; that is, improves what God bestows, *shall more be given:* but *from him that hath not*, i. e. doth not profit with it, as the wicked Servant did not, *who went, and hid his Talent, shall be taken away even what he hath*, Mat. 25. 25, 29. And when St. *Paul* tells us, *God works in us both to will and to do*; he tells us withal, that we must be *Fellow-workers*, and *work out our own Salvation*, Phil 2. 12, 13.

Quest. Is *Eternal Life* another instance of Free-Grace?

Answ. Yes, it is an instance of it, and the Crown, and consummation of all the rest. It is called the *Gift of God*, Rom. 6. 23. and the *Free gift of God*, Rom. 5. 15, 16, 18.

Quest. And is it also bestow'd upon Conditions? *Answ.*

Answ. Yes, upon condition of our Obedience to the Laws of God. *Being made perfect thro' Suffering, Christ became the Author of Eternal Salvation, to those that obey him,* Heb. 5. 9. And *blessed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life,* Rev. 22. 14.

Quest. The Grace we have by the death of *Christ* then is free, as you say, only as that excludes all our Deserts, but not as it excludes all Terms and Conditions.

Answ. Very right. And this is plain by that way wherein God makes over all that Grace to us, which is by the *New Covenant.* For what is given by way of *Covenant*, is given upon Terms; because Covenants differ from absolute Grants, and imply Articles on both sides. And thus the Benefits of the Gospel are given to us. For *Christ's* sake, we shall receive Remission of sins, the Assistance of the Spirit, and Eternal Life, tho' we never deserved them: but we shall not receive them, unless we Repent, and obey in order to them.

Quest. By this I perceive, the Grace of *Christ* is no encouragement to sin, or slothfulness, and that his dying for our sins, will not save us from dying for them our selves, unless we repent of them?

Answ. Undoubtedly it will not.

Quest. But as soon as ever we repent, we may believe, and trust, that we shall be saved by it?

Answ. Yes; and this is the true *Faith in*

his Blood, that is, a Faith that our Life ſhall be ſpared, and we reconciled to God, for the ſake of it. *God hath ſet forth Chriſt a Propitiation, for the Remiſſion of ſins that are paſs'd, thro' Faith in his Blood*, Rom. 3.25. But this Faith belongs not to any, whilſt they continue in ſin, and are wicked men, but only when they begin to obey, and ſerve him.

Queſt. From what you have ſaid, it appears, that *Chriſt's* great aim in dying for us, was to reclaim us from our ſins, and make us holy and good men: and that he purchaſed Reconciliation, and the favour of God, only to ſhew us it would not be in vain, and to encourage us to become ſo.

Anſw. Yes, ſo it was. For *he gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie to himſelf a peculiar people, zealous of good works*, Tit. 2. 14. And *he bare our ſins in his own Body upon the Tree, that we being dead to ſin, ſhould live unto righteouſneſs*, 1 Pet. 2. 24.

Queſt. You ſay *Chriſt* died to atone, and ſatisfie for ſins, that God might pardon us when we repent of them. But why did he not think Repentance enough without a Ranſom? Why would he not pardon Penitents, unleſs *Chriſt* would die to make ſatisfaction for them?

Anſw. Becauſe the requiring ſuch a ſatisfaction, ſhewed his perfect hatred of ſin, which is for the Honour of his Holineſs; and the ſtrict care of his Laws, which maintains

tains the Reputation of his Justice; and took off all hope of impunity, if men shall go on still to transgress, and so was the greatest discouragement to future offences. All which would have been otherwise, had he been easie in forgiving, and admitted of a Reconciliation without a Ransom.

Quest. How doth the requiring such a satisfaction, shew his *perfect hatred of sin*, for the *Honour of his Holiness*?

Answ. Because he would not remit the Punishment of it, but upon the highest Ransom; and because, when he undertook to answer for it, he would not spare it in his own Son, so that his hatred to it could not be overcome even by his love to him. Nay, moreover, because when, in consideration of his infinite Merits, and their Repentance, he returns into favour with them; yet, to shew his absolute detestation of their former sins, he will not receive even the Prayers and Devotions of Penitent Sinners at their own Hands, or treat with them in person, but requires a *Mediator* to offer up, and transact all for them. And withal, admitting no other, either in Heaven or Earth, for that *Advocate*, but only his own eternal, and most dearly beloved Son: To shew, that when they offered the greatest Consideration, yet, in indignation at their former Provocations, he would have no deangs with them by any person, less great, and dear than him.

Quest. How doth it shew his *strict care of*

his Laws, for the *Honour of his Justice*?

Answ. Because he would not dispense with the threatnings of those Laws, where he had no less a Reason, than the Salvation of all men, the greatest and most considerable part of the visible Creation, without a valuable recompence.

Quest. How doth it cut off all *hopes of impunity*, and utterly discourage all future offenders?

Answ. Because God has no more Sons to die for us, and when he was sollicited to remit the punishment of our sins, he would not do it upon a less exchange. When man sinn'd against the Law of unerring Obedience, upon the Merits and Death of his Son, God pardon'd that, and admitted them to favour again upon their Repentance. But if they shall offend against this Law too, and be finally impenitent, there are no Sons of God to suffer again, to purchase their Forgiveness.

Quest. So that *Christ's* Suffering for us, salved all the Honour of God's Attributes, and served all the Purposes of his Justice, that would have been served by our suffering for our selves?

Answ. It did so, and to the full as well too; the punishing of his own Son, when he answered for Sinners, shewing a more implacable hatred of sin, and inexorable Justice, than he could have shewn, by punishing all the World, who were Sinners themselves. And therefore his death was

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a satisfaction to God, for the sins of the whole World. Not only a satisfaction to Benevolence, and yielding Goodness; as when easy and indulgent Natures, are appeas'd by any small returns, and incompetent Recompences: but a Satisfaction to Justice, by way of full Compensation and Equivalence; *Christ*, by his one suffering displaying the Honour of all God's Attributes as much as God could have display'd them, by punishing the whole Humane Race.

Quest. If the Death and Sacrifice of *Christ*, were so full a satisfaction at first, there is no more now to be paid, and it need never be repeated?

Answ. No, nor ever must it. The *Jewish* Sacrifices, needed constantly to be repeated; because, being of little worth, and very imperfect, their virtue was soon spent; so that *year by year they were continually offered*, Heb. 9. 25. and 10. 1, 3. But his being full and perfect from the first, and leaving nothing to be added, *He is not to be offered often, but at once hath he put away sin, by the Sacrifice of himself*, Heb. 9. 25, 26. and 10. 14. But altho his Sacrifice is no more to be really acted, as it needs not, the whole effect of it being as fresh and full now, as it was at first; yet is it daily still commemorated, and the virtue thereof apply'd, in every *good Prayer*, but especially in every *Sacrament*.

Quest. What learn you from *Christ*'s dying a Ransom for our sins?

Answ. 1. To *abhor sin*, since it is so odious to God, that he can spare it in no person, no not in his own Son, when he took other men's sins upon him. And if he spared not him, when he would bear the punishment for us; how can we hope he will in the least spare us, when we come to undergo it for our selves. *If these things were done in the green Tree, what shall be done in the dry*, Luk. 23. 31.

2 To *give our selves* up to the service of *Christ*, who hath bought us for his own property, at so dear a rate. This is the least we can do, in Equity and Justice. *Ye are bought with a price, therefore glorifie God in your Bodies and Spirits, which are God's*, by such costly purchase, 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. And if there is any spark of Love and Gratitude in our Hearts, we can do no less in Resentment of such stupendious kindness. *For the Love of Christ constrains us, because we thus judge, that if Christ died for all, they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them*, 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15.

Quest. Ought it not also to teach us *Faith in God*, and to beget in us a firm Trust, that he will perform whatsoever he has promised?

Answ. Yes; as plainly shewing, that nothing is too great for his love to make good. *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?* Rom. 8. 32.

Quest.

Queſt. Muſt not his *Patience*, and *Charity* in his Sufferings, not *reviling* again, but *praying for his Enemies*, teach us the ſame, when we are called to ſuffer?

Anſw. Yes; for in *ſuffering thus, without threatning*, and *when he was reviled, not reviling again, he hath left us an example, that we ſhould follow his ſteps*, 1 Pet. 2. 21. 23.

Queſt. Should not God's impoſing ſo many, and great ſecular hardſhips and ſufferings on his own moſt dear Son, make us have eaſier thoughts of theſe things than others have, and *reconcile us to Affliction?*

Anſw. In all Reaſon it ſhould. For it ſhews how inconſiderable worldly Goods and Glories are in Gods Eyes; how temporal evils are allotted to the deareſt perſons, how proper they are to Diſcipline, and improve the moſt virtuous, how they perfect Piety, and what a ſtep they are to Felicity and Glory. *Jeſus himſelf, tho' he were a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he ſuffered*, Heb. 5. 8. *He was made perfect through ſuffering*, Heb. 2. 10. *He ought to ſuffer, and ſo enter into his Glory*, Luk. 24. 26. *We ſee him for ſuffering death, crowned with Glory and Honour*, Heb. 2. 9. And ſeeing Sufferings, not only thus providentially allotted, but alſo thus profitably undergone, and highly recompenced in him; the bleſſed *Apoſtles* and *primitive Saints*, whoſe Ambition it was to be in all things his true followers, did not repine and mourn, but rejoyce and glory in them.

Quest. And since in dying for us, he has shewed us such stupendious Love, must not that mutually endear us, and teach us if we would be his followers, most tenderly to *love one another?*

Answ. Yes; *if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another,* 1 Joh. 4. 11. Nay, since *hereby we perceive the love of God to us, because he laid down his life for us; we ought,* upon just occasion, *to lay down our lives for the Brethren,* 1 Joh. 3. 16.

Quest. In the *Creed,* you say *dead* and *buried.* When *Christ* expired upon the Cross, was his Body taken down, and buried?

Answ. Yes, it was laid in a Tomb, and a great Stone roll'd before its mouth, according to the *Jewish* Custom. And *for fear his Disciples should come by night, and steal him away,* the *Jewish Rulers,* when they *had sealed the Stone,* got a *Guard* from the *Governour* to *watch* it, *Mat.* 27. 64, 66.

Quest. What mean you by *Christ's descent into Hell?*

Answ. His abode in that state of Death and Separation, or his Soul's being in the place of Separate Souls, till it was united again to his Body, at his Resurrection; as it is written, *Thou shalt not leave my Soul in Hell,* Acts 2. 27. which St. *Peter* there says, was *fulfilled* in the *Resurrection of Christ,* when he ceased to continue under *the power of death,* and gloriously *arose to triumph over it,* v. 30, 31.

Quest.

Queſt. Doth the word *Hell*, ſometimes ſignifie only the ſtate of the Dead, or the place of Souls departed?

Anſw. Yes, as *David* ſays of all men, *What man is he that liveth, and ſhall not ſee death, and ſhall he deliver his Soul from the hand of Hell?* Pſal. 89. 48. And as *Jacob* talked of *going down to Hell to* Joſeph, when he thought *ſome evil Beaſt had devoured him*, Gen. 37. 33, 35. In both which places, the word tranſlated *Grave* in our *Bibles*, in the *Greek* is *Hades*, the very word that ſtands for *Hell* here in the *Creed*. Oft-times, indeed, eſpecially in the *New Teſtament*, Hell ſignifies, not in general, the ſtate of the Dead, but particularly the ſtate of the Wicked, and the place of Torment. In which ſenſe it is not likely that *Chriſt deſcended into Hell* after his death, becauſe in his dying hour he told the *Penitent Thief*, *This day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe*, Luk. 23. 43.

CHAP. III.

Of the Reſurrection of Chriſt, and his ſitting at God's Right-Hand.

The Contents.

An Account how Chriſt may be ſaid to have been three days in the Earth. His Reſurrection proved. The neceſſity of it. He aſcended

ascended to Heaven. What is meant by his sitting at the Right-Hand of God. There he, 1. *Intercedes for us, as our Priest. This intercession not vocal, by Words and formal Pleas, but by presenting himself, and his own meritorious Sacrifice. He intercedes only for Covenant-Mercies, and on Covenant-Terms. He is an Intercessor of absolute Power with God, and truest Affection for us. One part of his intercession, is to hand and present our Prayers to God. Therefore whensoever we pray for any thing, 'tis both our duty, and wisdom to apply by him.* 2. *Governs his Church, as a King. In what Acts this consists.* 3. *Instructs his Church, as a Prophet, by sending to it the Holy Ghost. Christ's Body having now taken up its fixt abode at God's Right-hand, we are not in any Ordinances to expect his Bodily Presence, but only a Presence by his Spirit, which is more to be desired. Some Inferences from Christ's sitting at God's Right-hand.*

Quest. HOw long did *Jesus Christ* abide in the state of the Dead; till his Body was corrupted?

Answ. No, he staid not so long. *God did not suffer his Holy one to see Corruption,* Acts 13. 35, 36, 37. but reunited his Soul and Body, and *raised him from the dead on the third day,* before the time Corruption usually seizes the Bodies of dead men.

Quest. Christ said of himself, as the *Jews* told

told *Pilate*, That *after three days he would rise again*, Mat. 27. 63. And as *Jonas was three days, and three nights, in the Whales Belly: so*, says he, *shall the Son of Man be three days, and three nights, in the heart of the Earth*, Mat. 12. 40. But if he died as we commemorate his death, upon *Good-Friday*, and rose † early on *Easter-day* in the morning, there were only part of two days, and one entire day between. † *Mar.* 16. 1, 2.

Answ. That is, *three days*, according to common computation of days, both Ancient and Modern, and particularly in *Scripture* reckoning. Thus *Lazarus* is said *four days dead*, though the *fourth day*, whereon *Jesus* raised him up, was one of them, *Joh.* 11. 39. And *eight days* are said to be *accomplished, for Christ's Circumcision*; but the day of his Birth, and Circumcision too, went both in to that Reckoning, *Luk.* 2. 21. And the Priests in their courses were appointed, and † reputed, to *Minister before the Lord eight days*, though the time of Entrance, and Release, was † *every Sabbath day morning*. And accordingly, what in the currant way of expression, is thus sometimes termed *three days*, our Saviour speaking more exactly at other times, expresses by *on the third*, or *within three days*. *Jesus shewed his Disciples, he should rise again the third day*, Mat. 16. 21. and 17. 23. and 20. 19. And, *destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up*, Joh. 2. 19. or, *within three days*, as the *Jews*, who otherwhere † *Joseph. Antiqu. l.* 7. *c.* 11. † 2 *King.* 11. 5 7. & 2 *Chron.* 23. 4.

where call it *after three days*, related it, *Mark* 14. 58.

Queſt. How doth it appear, that *Chriſt* was raiſed again *from the dead*?

Anſw. It might appear to any, who had the curioſity to look into the Sepulchre; for they would ſee he was gone.

Queſt. What ſaid the *Watch*, who ſtood to guard him?

Anſw. They knew it full well, for when the *Angel*, with a *Countenance like Lightning*, *deſcended in an Earth-quake*, to *roll back the Stone*, *the Keepers ſaw it*, *and ſhaked*, *and became as dead men*, Mat. 28. 2, 3, 4. But the *Jewiſh Rulers bribed them*, *to ſay*, *his Diſciples came by night*, *and ſtole him away while they ſlept*, v. 11, 12, 13, 14. which was a fooliſh lie, and bore along with it its own Confutation.

Queſt. How ſo?

Anſw. Becauſe, if they were aſleep, how could they tell any one ſtole him? If they had any thoughts of what others did then, it could be only in a Dream; unleſs they would pretend to ſleep with their Senſes awake, and their Eyes open.

Queſt. But *this ſaying*, ſaith St. *Matthew*, *is commonly reported among the* Jews, and paſſes for a Truth with them, *Mat.* 28. 15. And by what other ways can you convince them, that *Chriſt* is riſen?

Anſw. By thoſe that ſaw him, and converſed with him after his *Reſurrection*. For † *Act.* 1. 3. he appeared *for* the ſpace *of* † *forty days* to his

his *Apoſtles*, and to ſatisfie them he had a real Body, *eat and drank with them after he was riſen*, Acts 10. 41. Luk. 24. 43. He appeared to *Thomas*, who ſearched *the holes the Nails had made in his Hands*, and *thruſt his Finger into his Side*, where the Spear had pierced it, before he would *believe* him, *Joh.* 20. 27, 28. *To five hundred Brethren all at one time*, 1 Cor. 15. 6. To *Stephen* in a bright *Glory from Heaven*, at his Martyrdom, *Acts* 7. 56. and to *Saul*, at his Converſion, *Acts* 9. 3, 4. Yea, after he was riſen, and gone to Heaven, he *ſent down the Holy Ghoſt* upon his *Apoſtles* and followers, which ſhewed, not only that he is alive again, but alſo that he lives in Power.

Queſt. The *Apoſtles* ſeem extraordinary careful, to confirm the *Reſurrection of Chriſt*, and call *the ordaining one to be an Apoſtle, ordaining him to be a witneſs of it*, Acts 1.22. Was it neceſſary that Chriſt ſhould riſe from the dead?

Anſw. Yes, to ſhew the debt he died for was diſcharged, and that his ſatisfaction was accepted. He died as a Sacrifice, to ſatisfie for our ſins; and till God raiſed him up again, it did not appear that he was ſatisfied with what *Chriſt* had done for us. *If Chriſt be not riſen, ye are yet in your ſins*, 1 Cor. 15. 17.

Queſt. But was not his death a full payment, and, on the *Croſs*, did he not relate to that, when he ſaid *it is finiſhed*, Joh. 19.30?

Anſw.

Anſw. It was ſo indeed, the price of Redemption then was fully paid. But till he raiſed him up again, God had given no publick Acquittance, nor done any open Act, to ſhew we were diſcharged by it. So that by his Reſurrection, we are ſaid *to be juſtified*, that is, declared to be ſo. *He died for our ſins, and roſe again for our Juſtification*, Rom. 4. 25. and *who is he that condemneth? it is Chriſt that died, yea rather, that is riſen again*, Rom. 8. 34.

Queſt. Was his Reſurrection neceſſary on any other Accounts?

Anſw. Yes; for, 2. In virtue of his death, he was to be our *Mediator*, to intercede with God for us; and our *Saviour* and *Deliverer*, to protect and reſcue us from our Spiritual Enemies: And theſe great works ſuppoſe a live man, and are not to be performed by a dead perſon. And being thus neceſſary to diſcharge his continual care of us; it muſt be equally ſo, to ſupport our Faith and Truſt in him. When men are dead, we expect no ſervice, or ſuccour from them: And therefore were he ſtill in the Grave, we ſhould not fix our Hope and Truſt in, or make our Addreſſes to him.

Queſt. Was it neceſſary, to ſhew him to be the *Meſſiah*, and to prove his Religion?

Anſw. Yes, for he had appealed to it, as *a ſign* of his being a *true Prophet*, Mat. 12. 38, 39, 40. And therefore by the † Deut. 18. 18, 21, 22. way of tryal which God † preſcribed the *Jews*, *viz.* the *accompliſhment of predictions*, he

he had appear'd to be a falſe *Prophet*, had he failed in it. So that *if Chriſt be not riſen*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *your Faith is vain*, 1 Cor. 15. 14.

Queſt. In his Death and Reſurrection, methinks we have a plain and palpable inſtance of the immortality of Humane Souls, and of a future Life beyond the Grave, where God may reward or puniſh us?

Anſw. So we have. For his Soul manifeſtly did exiſt apart from his Body, during the time of their Separation, till on the *third day* it was reunited again. So that mens Souls can ſubſiſt without, as well as in their Bodies, and when they depart hence, go into another place, where they are capable of being called to account for all they have done in this life. On which account, as well as others, St. *Paul* might well ſay, That God hath *given aſſurance of a future Life* and *Judgment*, *by raiſing Chriſt from the dead*, Acts 17. 31. And St. *Peter*, That *God hath begotten us to the hope of an Eternal Inheritance*, *thro' the Reſurrection of Chriſt from the Dead*, 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4.

Queſt. We read of ſeveral others, that roſe from the Dead, as well as *Chriſt*; had he any thing ſingular in his Reſurrection above them?

Anſw. Yes, he raiſed himſelf by his own power, but they were all raiſed by him; he was not only the *firſt* that roſe, but as the *Firſt-Fruits*, and all the World beſides riſe as the enſuing Crop, which depends upon

upon him. *Deſtroy this Temple*, ſaith he, *and in three days I will raiſe it up*, Joh. 2. 19, 21. *I lay down my life, and take it up again*, Joh. 10. 18. *He is the firſt-born from the Dead*, Col. 1. 18. Rev. 1. 5. *As in* Adam *all die, ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive: but every man in his own order, Chriſt the Firſt-fruits, afterwards they that are Chriſt's at his coming*, 1 Cor. 15. 22, 23.

Queſt. But did not *Lazarus* riſe before *Chriſt*, John 11. 44. and *Jairus*'s *Daughter*, Luk. 8. 55. and the *Widows Son of* Nain, Luk. 7. 12, 14, 15. and how then is he ſaid to be the *firſt of the Dead*, that returned?

Anſw. They returned to die again; but he was the firſt that roſe to life everlaſting. *He being raiſed, dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him*, Rom. 6. 9.

Queſt. By his Reſurrection, *Chriſt* got Glory and Happineſs to himſelf, even that Joy, for which St. *Paul* ſays, *he endured the Croſs*, Heb. 12. 2. But did he thereby acquire any Power over us?

Anſw. Yes, his Death purchaſed, and his Reſurrection inveſted him with an abſolute Power and Dominion over us. *For this end, Chriſt both died, and roſe, and revived, that he might be Lord, both of the Dead and Living*, Rom. 14. 9. And after his Reſurrection, ſaith he, *All Power is given to me, both in Heaven, and in Earth*, Mat. 28. 18.

Queſt. If ſo, his Reſurrection lays an obligation upon us to obey him?

Anſw. Yes; *like as he roſe from the dead, ſo*

so must we rise to newness of life, Rom. 6. 4.

Quest How long stay'd he upon Earth, after he was risen again?

Answ. For the space of *forty days, discoursing, and speaking of the things concerning the Kingdom of God*, Acts 1. 3.

Quest. Whither went he when he left it?

Answ. To Heaven, whither he was taken up in a *bright Cloud*, all the *Apostles looking up* after him, *till he was taken up out of their sight*, Acts 1. 3, 9. And now he is there, he *sitteth at the right hand of God.*

Quest. What mean you by his *sitting at the right hand of God?*

Answ. His advancement to the heighth of Dignity and Authority, in the presence of God. The *Right-hand* of a Prince, is the place of peculiar Favour, and of highest Honour and Respect: as *Solomon*, when he would *do Honour* to his Mother *Bathsheba, set her at his Right-hand*, 1 King. 2. 19. To be placed at hand, by the priviledge of nearness, gives opportunity for Conference and Address: And to be placed at the Right-hand, the Hand of use and business, is to be in the way, both of presenting all Offers, and receiving of Returns; whence it is a known mark of special Favour and Honour, with all Potentates. And so by Christ's *sitting at God's Right-Hand*, is expressed his Soveraign Honour and Power, in the presence of God. Or, perhaps, moreover his sitting in his humane shape,

on the Right-hand of that Bright Throne, or Resplendant Glory, which visibly accompanies, and manifests some extraordinary presence of God: as he appeared to *Stephen in his Vision, who saw the Glory of God, and Jesus standing on the Right-hand of God*; that is, I suppose, at the Right-hand of that visible Glory, wherewith God appeared, *Acts* 7. 55. And this, probably, is what the *Scripture* means, by *his sitting at the Right-hand of Power*, Mat. 26. 64. and *on the Right-hand of Majesty*, Heb. 1. 3. That is, on the Right-hand of such † Glory, or bright Appearance, which is the usual Symbol of God's Power and Majesty, which at other times is expressed, by *his sitting on the Right-hand of the Throne of God*, Heb. 12. 2. or, *on the Right-hand of the Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens*, Heb. 8. 1.

† Exod. 24. 16, 17. Ezek. 1. 27, 28.

Quest. It was most just that he should be exalted thither in recompence of his meritorious sufferings, as the *Apostle* notes, *Phil.* 2. 8, 9. and *Heb.* 12. 2. But is he gone thither, to carry on any Designs for us?

Answ. Yes, and those of the greatest importance. For there, in the highest manner and to the fullest effect, he exercises all his Offices in our behalf.

Quest. I pray you explain the Designs he carries on for us there?

Answ. First, The work of *Intercession, as our Priest.* For he stands before God to mediate on our behalf, and to obtain for us, whatsoever God has promised, or he has

has purchaſed, or we ſtand in need of. *He is enter'd into Heaven it ſelf, now to appear in the preſence of God for us*, Heb. 9. 24.

Queſt. Doth he then plead with God, and move and Petition him, for all the things we gain from him?

Anſw. His Interceſſion is not by Words, and formal Pleas, and Supplications; but by Actions; that is, by preſenting of himſelf, and ſhewing his own Sacrificed Body before God. He intercedes, by ſhewing of himſelf, and therefore St. *Paul* calls his Interceſſion, *his appearance in the preſence of God for us*, Heb. 9. 24.

Queſt. And is this way as effectual, as by forming Vocal Pleas?

Anſw. Yes undoubtedly. The Blood of his Sacrifice, as St. *Paul* ſays, *ſpeaks*, Heb. 12. 24. It doth not only breathe out Prayers, but prefers Claims and Demands; and thoſe too, not only in virtue of Gods Promiſe, but alſo of his own Merits and dear-bought Purchaſe, which is a way of moving with Power and Prevalence, beyond all expreſſions.

Queſt. Did the *High-Prieſt* among the *Jews*, intercede thus?

Anſw. Yes; when he went in to intercede with God in the *Holy of Holies*, after he had ſlain the Sacrifice, he was not directed to make any ſet Speeches, and vocal Supplications, but only to carry in the *Blood of Expiation*, and preſent it to God, by *ſprinkling it upon, and before the Mercy-*

seat, Lev. 16. 14, 15. which real exhibition of the thing it self, that was to plead for them, was more moving and effectual, than any Verbal Speech, or Vocal Prayer, he could have put up for them.

Quest. And will Christ continue thus to intercede for us; that is, to shew himself, and exhibit his Sacrifice before God in our behalf, always?

Answ. Yes, *he ever lives to make intercession for us*, which renders him *able to save to the uttermost, them that come to God by him*, Heb. 7. 25. And therefore *the Heavens must receive him, till the restitution of all things*, Acts 3. 21. It was enough for the *Sacrificing* part of his *Priest-hood*, which made the Purchase to be once done. But the *Interceding* part, which brings down the purchased Blessings to all men, in all times and places, must still be a doing. And therefore he continues in the presence of God, to shew himself, and intercede, to the end of the World; which will be so long, as he will exercise his Mediatory Power, or we shall stand in need of his Intercession.

Quest. What things will he move, and intercede with God for, which therefore we may make sure to speed in?

Answ. For all the Benefits he has purchased, and God has promised, which are all contain'd in the *New-Covenant*. His intercession in virtue of his Blood, is only to apply the Merits and Purchase of it. So that as at first he *shed* it, so now he *shews* his

his Blood, for *Covenant-Mercies*, and on *Covenant-Terms*; but he never moves that any Perſon ſhould obtain them otherwiſe.

Queſt. Then he will never move for wicked and obdurate Sinners, that God would relax the ſeverity of his Laws for their ſakes. Nor, for ſlothful and careleſs ones, that by an over-powering and irreſiſtible Grace, he would do all for them, and work his Will in them, and ſo ſave all their Pains. Since the New Covenant offers no Pardon, but to the Penitent; nor ſaving Grace, but to the Sincere and Induſtrious?

Anſw. Very Right.

Queſt. By this I ſee, we muſt by no means look upon *Chriſt* at *God's Right-Hand*, as a Byaſſed, Partial Advocate, that ſeeks to wring what he can from God, and gain all for our ſide. But as an Equal and Impartial Mediator, who has a juſt Regard to both ſides, and will ſhew himſelf as careful of God's Authority and Honour, by ſecuring him of our Duty, as of our wellfare, by obtaining for us his Mercy?

Anſw. Moſt certainly. *For this cauſe*, ſaith St. Paul, *of purging our Conſciences from dead Works to God's Service*, as well, as *that they who are called, may receive the Promiſe of the Eternal Inheritance, he is the Mediator of the New Teſtament*, Heb. 9. 14, 15. In diſcharging this Truſt, we may be ſure, in the heighth of all his care for us, he will be juſt to God. Nay, being God's own

Son, and both intimately nearer Related to, and better pleased with him, than he is with us, were he any ways capable of being byassed, we cannot imagine it should be on ours, but on his side. So that in all the Part he acts as our *Intercessor*, we must not imagine, that he will in the least dishonour God to oblige us, or ever once aim, or attempt to make us secure, in any undutifulness, and contempt of his, and our Heavenly Father.

Quest. Surely, being the most dearly Beloved Son of God, he must needs be an Intercessor of Great Power?

Answ. Yes, of Absolute Power, and infallibly sure to gain whatsoever he moves for. For, besides his Relation and Filial nearness, he continually Represents his own infinite Merits, which can claim any Favours. Nay, for the sake of those Merits, on this Appearance to plead them before God, he is made a *Royal Priest*, and has all Power given unto him as a King, so that he can grant what he pleases. *Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye ask any thing in my Name, I will do it.* Joh. 14. 13, 14.

Quest. This shews how able he is to Succeed, but is he willing, and ready to use all his Interest, and move for us?

Answ. No doubt of that. For his Love has made him shed for us his own Hearts-Blood, and therefore it can never stick at any

any other Service, or procuring for us any Bleſſings from Almighty God. *He is a Merciful, and Faithful High-Prieſt*, both true to our Intereſts, and tender of our Infirmities, having felt them in himſelf, *Heb.* 2. 17. and 4. 15. and therefore is as willing and ready, as he is able to intercede for us.

Queſt. Is it particularly any part of his Interceſſion, to hand and preſent our Prayers?

Anſw. Yes. This was the Buſineſs of the *Jewiſh Prieſts*. One part of their *Prieſthood* was to *burn Incenſe*, which was to perfume the Peoples Prayers, who, as St. *Luke* notes, *prayed without, in the time of Incenſe*, *Luk.* 1. 10. preſenting their Prayers to God in theſe ſweet Smells; whence the *Pſalmiſt* begs his *Prayers may be ſet forth before God as the Incenſe*, Pſal. 141. 2. And *the Vials of Odors*, or *Incenſe*, in the *Revelations*, St. *John* ſays, are *the Prayers of the Saints*, Rev. 5. 8. And this accordingly, *Chriſt* our Interceſſor in Heaven doth for us: for he is *the Angel* in the *Revelations*, who *on the golden Altar before the Throne, offers the Incenſe, with the Prayers of all Saints*, Rev. 8. 3. By him it is we muſt preſent all our Prayers; whence we are ſaid, *thro' him to have acceſs to the Father*, Eph. 2. 18. and *in him to have boldneſs, and acceſs with confidence*, Eph. 3. 12. Nay, ſince the Prayers we put up, have many ſinful Defects adhering to them, they are fit to come to a moſt holy God from the Hand of no other *Mediator*, but him,

who has not only the acceptableneſs of his Perſon to prefer, but the Merit of his Sacrifice too to atone for them.

Queſt. By this it ſhould ſeem, that whenſoever we pray for any thing to Almighty God, we ſhould not ſeek after other Mediators, but apply by him. And ſince he is ſo Powerful in Mediation, this is not only our bounden Duty, but our trueſt Wiſdom?

Anſw. So it is: For, *he is our Advocate with the Father*, 1 John 2. 1. the *one Mediator between God and Man*, 1 Tim. 2. 5. *Whatſoever*, ſays he, *you ſhall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you*, John 16. 23. We are ſure he is now in the immediate Preſence of God, to prefer any Suit; but we are not ſure that Departed Saints are there, who, for ought we know, may be kept till the laſt Day in ſome inferior Place of Comfort and Refreſhment; Good Souls, as I ſhall note hereafter, not receiving their Conſummation before the laſt Judgment. When we addreſs by him, we only take that way of Application God himſelf has preſcribed; and in all Juſtice, and Reaſon, we ſhould allow God the Direction how we ſhall ſeek his Favours, ſince he is the moſt Free and Soveraign Diſpoſer of them. Nay, ſince the Prayers we put up are uttered by ſinful Lips, and mingled with our own Frailties and Defects, they can come worthy and pure to God from him alone, whoſe Blood, as I ſaid, has Merit enough to purge, as well as his Perſon Favour enough

enough to prefer them. Tho a perfect Prayer, had not God otherwiſe order'd it, might in it ſelf be preſented, eſpecially from a perfect Man, by an acceptable Mediator; yet a ſinful Prayer, from ſinful Men, doth plainly need ſuch a Mediator, as in the ſame Perſon is both *Interceſſor* and *Redeemer*. Thus the *Altar of Incenſe* among the *Jews*, which *ſtood without the Vail, before the Mercy-ſeat, daily* to perfume and preſent the Peoples Prayers, was *once a year to be ſprinkled with the Blood of Atonement*, plainly intimating, that the Means of preſenting Prayers, muſt be endow'd withal with a Power of expiating them, *Exod.* 30. 6, 7, 8, 10. And accordingly, the *Apoſtle* mentions *Chriſt*'s Mediation, as joyn'd to, and founded on his Redemption. *One Mediator between God and Man, the Man Chriſt Jeſus, who gave himſelf a Ranſom for all*, 1 Tim. 2. 5, 6. And, *If any Man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, who is* alſo *the Propitiation for our Sins*, 1 Joh. 2. 1, 2.

Queſt. What other Deſign doth *Chriſt* carry on for us in Heaven?

Anſw. 2. The Care of *Governing his Church* as a *King*. *He is at the Right-hand of God; Angels, and Authorities, and Powers, being ſubject unto him*, 1 Pet. 3. 22. and *all Authority in Heaven, and Earth, being put into his Hand*, Mat. 28. 18. This Power he purchaſed by his Death; but was put in full Poſſeſſion of it, when he came to claim it by his Interceſſion. *Queſt.*

Quest. Wherein doth he exercise this Plenitude of Power?

Answ. In Giving Laws to his Church: For *he is the one Law-giver, that is able either to save, or to destroy*, Jam. 4. 12. And since he is the Legislator in Religion, 'tis an Usurpation upon his Prerogative, for any to form to themselves a new-fangled Worship, and beat out other Paths to Heaven of their own devising.

In Protecting it from all, both outward and intestine Enemies, whether the World, the Flesh, or Men, or Devils. For *he sits at God's Right-hand, till his Enemies be made his Foot-stooll*, Psal. 110. 1. and Heb. 10. 12, 13. and *he must reign till he hath put all Enemies under his Feet*, 1 Cor. 15. 25.

And, lastly, in judging all the World, to their present Portion of the Eternal State when they leave the Body, and to the full Consummation of it at the last Day. *For* now, *the Father judgeth no Man, but hath committed all Judgment to the Son*, Joh. 5. 22. 27. Which, as it makes for the unspeakable Comfort of all his Faithful Servants, since they are to be judg'd by their own *Advocate*, who has preferr'd their Ease and Happiness to his own Life; so will it be to the eternal Terrour of all *those his Enemies, who would not have him to reign over them*, Luk. 19. 27. And all this Power he exercises himself from Heaven, besides what he doth by his *Bishops* and *Pastors*, who are the Officers of his Kingdom, and his

 Deputies

Deputies and Substitutes here on Earth.

Quest. Has he any other Business to do for us at God's Right-hand, as our *King?*

Answ. Yes, to *prepare a Place for us*, and allot us Royal Habitations with himself. *I go to prepare a Place for you, and I will come again, and receive you to my self, that where I am, there ye may be also*, Joh. 14. 2, 3. The *First Adam* lost *Paradise*, and the *Second Adam* was to restore us to it: Who, after he had merited it for us by his Cross, ascended into Heaven, to instal our Nature there, and claim his Purchase. And, discharging the mighty Angel, whose flaming Sword, after the Fall, was set to guard the Passage to it from our Intrusions, open'd the Kingdom of Heaven to all Believers.

Quest. What further Concern did he transact for us, by going to Heaven?

Answ. 3. As a *Prophet*, he sent down the *Holy Ghost*, to instruct his Church in his Absence, and to be with us in his stead. *It is expedient for you, that I go away: For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you*, Joh. 16. 7. *Being by the Right-hand of God exalted, he received the Promise of the Holy Ghost*, Act. 2. 33. and sent him on his *Apostles, to abide with them for ever*, Joh. 14. 16.

Quest. How did the *Holy-Spirit* supply his Absence?

Answ. By endowing them with such miraculous

raculous Gifts, as enabled them to propagate his Religion thro the World as effectually, as if he had ſtaid with them; and with ſuch inward Graces, as would fit themſelves for thoſe Manſions he had provided for them. Of both which, I ſhall ſay more in their proper place.

Queſt. And theſe Gifts, you ſay, he aſcended to beſtow upon his Church?

Anſw. Yes; *the Holy-Ghoſt was not to be given, till after Jeſus was glorified*, Joh. 7.39. but *when he aſcended up on high, he received Gifts for Men, that the Lord might dwell among them*, Pſal. 68. 18. and Eph. 4. 8.

Queſt. Now our Saviour *Chriſt* is Aſcended, is not his Glorified Body to take up its Manſion, and fixt Abode at God's Right-hand?

Anſw. Yes; as St. *Peter* told the *Jews*, *the Heavens muſt receive him, unto the Times of Reſtitution of all things*, Act. 3. 21. And then, as the *Angel* told his *Apoſtles*, *he ſhall ſo come again to judge the World from Heaven, in like manner as they then ſaw him go into Heaven*, Act. 1. 11.

Queſt. If his Bodily Preſence and Local Abode be at the *Right-hand of God's Throne in Heaven*, then we are not to expect any thing of a Bodily Preſence in any Ordinances here on Earth?

Anſw. No; as to his *Bodily Preſence*, it is expreſly ſaid, that *he parted from his Diſciples*, Luk. 24. 51. that *he left the World*, Joh. 16. 28. and *is no more in the World*, Joh. 17. 11.

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Joh. 17. 11. and, tho *the Poor we ſhould, yet him we ſhould not have always with us*, Mat. 26. 11. that *whilſt we are in the Body, we are abſent from him*, 2 Cor. 5. 6. and are not to *be with him, till we depart hence*, Phil. 1. 23. that his Bodily Abode is *in Heaven*, where he is to remain *till the Conſummation*, Act. 3. 21. and without *aſcending to Heaven* to fetch him, there is no *bringing him back* to Earth again, *Rom.* 10. 6. and when he comes to judge the World, it ſhall be from thence by Change of Place and Local Motion, call'd *his Deſcending from Heaven*, 1 Theſſ. 4. 16. and *coming in the Clouds of Heaven*, Mat. 26. 64. and the Saints are *to be call'd* up from the Earth *into the Air to meet him*, 1 Theſſ. 4. 17. All which plainly imply his Bodily Preſence to be circumſcribed, and limited to God's Right-hand, and no longer in this World. But the way of *Chriſt*'s Preſence with his Church, is by his *Spirit*, which works the ſame Effects, and confers the ſame Graces, that he himſelf would, were he perſonally upon Earth. His Spirit is his *Advocate*, who was to ſucceed in his Place, to maintain his Cauſe, *Joh.* 15. 26. and to ſtay with us all the time of his abſence, *he ſhall abide with you for ever*, Joh. 14. 16. And this Preſence of his Spirit, in all compleatneſs of Vertue and real Effects, he himſelf judges preferable to all Ocular Manifeſtations of his Perſon or Senſible Preſence; which, tho it might ſerve more to delight our Eyes, and enter-

tain

tain our Fancies, yet would signifie less to real and desirable Purposes. *'Tis expedient for you*, says he, *that I go away*, speaking to his *Disciples* of his Bodily Absence: *For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come; but if I depart, I will send him*, Joh. 16. 7. And, *It is the Spirit that quickneth, but the Flesh profits nothing*, said he at another time to the gross *Capernaites*, upon a like Competition of these *two* ways of his Presence with us, *Joh.* 6. 63.

Quest. What must we learn from *Christ*'s being exalted to such Sovereign and Supereminent Authority, at God's Right-hand?

Answ. To render him the *Reverence*, and *Obedience*, due to so High a Majesty. For since *God has* thus *highly exalted him, at his Name every Knee must bow, and every Tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father*, Phil. 2. 9, 10, 11.

Quest. What from his being so Compassionate, and Powerful an Advocate?

Answ. To come to him in every Want or Distress, with *Confidence* and *Assurance of Faith*; being fully perswaded, both of his Kindness for us, and of his Interest with God, to obtain whatsoever is necessary, or convenient for us. *Having such an High-Priest, let us come boldly unto the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help in time of need*, Heb. 4. 14, 16. But particularly, to come with sure Hope and Expectation of the Pardon of our Sins, when we truly repent of them; and of his Good

Good Spirit and Grace, when we are careful to make a Diligent and Right uſe of them. *If any Man Sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the Righteous, who is a Propitiation for our Sins*, 1 Joh. 2. 1, 2. And, *who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that dyed, yea rather that is riſen again, who alſo maketh interceſſion for us.* Rom. 3. 34.

Queſt. What learn we from his Power to Subdue all his Enemies?

Anſw. To truſt him, as I noted above, with the care of our ſelves, and of his Church, and not ſuffer our ſelves to be caſt into any anxious Fears, or forced upon the uſe of any unlawful means, by any Streights. But to believe, (let Dangers and Diſorders be what they will,) that the *Lord Reigns*, and that we and all his faithful People, are ſafeſt whilſt we are doing our Duty, and are in his hands. That indeed, is the true way to yield preſent ſecurity, but eſpecially, if thereby we happen to ſuffer, to make ſure a ſurpaſſing Recompence of Glory. *For this is a Faithful ſaying, if we be dead with him*, that is to Sin, *we ſhall alſo live with him*, that is in Glory: *If we ſuffer and endure*, that is, perſevere in obeying, chiefly when we obey with Loſs and Difficulty, *we ſhall alſo Reign with him.* 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12.

Queſt. Since *Chriſt* is now in Heaven, and we profeſs to fix all our Hopes in him: Should not that make us think much of that

Place

Place where he is, and of the way to come thither?

Answ. Without Question it should. *If ye be risen with Christ, seek those Things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the Right Hand of God*, Col. 3. 1. *Here in the Body, we sojourn from the Lord*, 2 Cor. 5. 6. *In this World we are strangers and Pilgrims*, 1 Pet. 2. 11. But God above is our Father, and *Jesus Christ*, at God's Right-Hand, is our Lord, and the *Glorified Saints are our Fellow-Citizens*, Eph. 2. 19. And being thus *Gods Family or Domesticks*, our *Conversation should be*, where our Civil Relation and Society is, that is *in Heaven, whence also we look for the Lord Jesus*, Phil. 3. 20. Since *our Treasure is* with him *in Heaven, there should our Hearts be also*, Mat. 6. 21. So that although in passing through this World, we cannot quite neglect the things of it, yet must we always heedfully mind, and carefully seek the things above it.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Future Judgment.

The Contents.

The necessity of the Future Judgment. All men are judged, and made happy or miserable, at their Deaths. But not so fully then, as they will be afterwards. The Compleat and General

ral Judgment, is at the end of the World. In that, Jesus Christ is to be the Judge. Who are to be judged. In that Judgment no Condemnation, but for breaking Gods Laws: So not for indifferent things. Men shall be tryed and sentenced for all their sinful Actions, with regard to their lasting Effects. For their most secret ones. And such ill deeds as were disguised under the faireſt Pretences. For their sinful Omissions. And Neglecting to Employ, and improve their Talents. For sinful Words. And Thoughts and Desires. For all these Men shall be judged impartially, without Respect of Persons. But with Equity and Candor, not in Rigor. The Benign Judge will be very ready to observe what makes for us, and make the best of our Performances. And interpret the seemingly Rigorous Expressions of his own Laws, with great condescension to Humane Measures. He will allow for involuntary Failings. And judge Candidly and Favourably of that involuntariness. And for Natural Infirmities. And for Providential disadvantages, as Multiplicity of Businesses, greatness of Temptations, Bodily Indispositions. For Pitiable Defects of Degrees in Duties. Great Latitude on the side of Bliss, and all not required to be of the same Size. He will Reward Good Things, tho' done with Difficulty and Reluctance, yea when Pitiably stain'd with impure mixtures. Our Judge will shew all this Candor, and would have us expect it. In Recompencing good

Men, he will consider the Difficulties and Oppositions, And the hazard, and cost of their Services. And the hardships of Providence, allotted to exercise good Men in this Life. Of the Condemnation of ill Men. The Fire, which is to torment them, shall burn up and dissolve the World. Practical Inferences from the last judgment.

Quest. THE *Seventh* Article is, That, from Gods Right-Hand, *Jesus Christ shall come to judge both the quick and the dead.* Is there any Necessity of a *Future Judgment?*

Answ. Yes, upon many Accounts. As,

1*st.* For an exact Discrimination, to distinguish Persons. Numbers of ill Men are Hypocrites, or Good only in outward appearance; and these pass here for Saints. But at the last Day, God will make them manifest, and put them into *Separate* Companies, *Dividing*, as *Christ* foretold, *the Sheep from the Goats*, Mal. 25. 32.

2. For the clearing of Gods Justice, which seems in this World oftentimes, to misplace Rewards and Punishments, afflicting the Righteous, and making Sinners Prosperous: and therfore will surly be manifested in allotting more suitable Retributions, visibly Rewarding the good, and Punishing the wicked afterwards. Thus St. *Paul* told the *Thessalonians*, that their Present Sufferings, who were Gods good Servants, was a Token and Pledge of Gods

Future

Future Rewards on them, and of his Puniſhments upon their Perſecutors. *The Perſecutions, and Tribulations you endure, are a manifeſt Token of the Righteous Judgment of God*, i. e. a token and ingagement, that God will hereafter manifeſt his Righteous Judgment, in their Puniſhment, and your Reward: *Seeing it is a Righteous Thing with God, to recompence Tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you, who are troubled, Reſt with us, when the Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from Heaven, with his mighty Angels*, 2 Theſ. 1. 4, 5, 6, 7. And *that Day*, St. *Paul* calls *the Revelation of the Righteous Judgment of God, when*, however here they might ſeem connived at, *God will render to every Man according to his Deeds*, Rom. 2. 5, 6.

3. For Reverſing the Error of all Humane Judgments. All Humane Courts are under God, who is the Supreme Diſpenſer of Juſtice, and Protector of injured Innocence. And therefore if Humane Courts, who are his Subſtitutes, through Corruption, or Miſtake, Condemn the Innocent; it may beſeem him, whoſe Care comprehends, and whoſe Juſtice will do Right to all, to Reverſe the Error, and clear them again to all the World.

4. For the ſupport of Religion, which has no ſufficient encouragement, without Hope of future Rewards. *He that comes to God* in Religion, *muſt believe he is a Rewarder of thoſe that diligently ſeek him*, Heb. 11. 6. *Moſes*, and the *Patriarchs*, ſerved God,

out of *a Respect to the Recompence of a Reward.* v. 26. And this Reward was not present here, but Future in another World. *They dyed, not having received the Promises, but only having seen them afar off,* confessing *themselves* here to be *Strangers and Pilgrims, and to seek a Country* in a better place. v. 13, 14, 16. So that they were Religious, from an eye to future Judgment and Retributions.

Quest. From these Reasons, it may seem fit and necessary, God should have a Future Judgment; but are we sure he will have it?

Answ. Yes; *he hath given assurance unto all men, that he will judge the World by Jesus Christ, by raising him from the Dead.* Act. 17. 31.

Quest. How doth this assure it?

Answ. Both as an Instance of it, since thereby he most justly rewarded our Saviour *Christ*, who had done and suffered so much for him in this World. And also as it was Gods owning, and irrefragable Testimony to his Doctrine, which declares the Future Judgment as a Principal Part of it.

Quest. When is this Judgment to be?

Answ. At the end of the World, when there shall be no more Days of Labour and Tryal, but all of Recompence, in Punishment or Reward.

Quest. If it be so far off, men will be the less afraid of it, they being very apt to overlook Dangers that lye remote; as indeed

indeed, when any things are far distant, to look upon Great ones as little, and little ones as none at all. And will none be judged, till the end of the World?

Answ. Yes: That is only for the General Judgment of all men. But every particular Man is sentenced at his Death, either to a State of Bliss, or Misery.

Quest. But if a man be condemned in the *First* Judgment, since there is so great a Distance betwixt it and the *Second*, may he not have time to make his Peace, and either by doing or suffering something himself, or by the Care and Kindness of his Friends, offering Sacrifices, Prayers or Alms for him, get the Sentence reversed, and his State alter'd, and come off clear at the last Judgment?

Answ. No: Betwixt the Place of Rewards and Punishments, in the other World, there is an *unpassable Gulph fixed, so that they who would pass from you to us, cannot*; as *Abraham*, told the *Rich Man in Torment* *. There is neither Repentance nor Reconciliation in the Grave. *When* once *the Night is come*, says our Saviour, *no Man can Work*, Joh. 9. 4. *Now, in this Life*, saith St. *Paul, is the accepted Time, now is the Day of Salvation*, 2 Cor. 6. 2. And at the last Day, Men shall all be tryed, not *for what they have done*, or suffered since they were separate Spirits, but for what they did when they were Cloathed with their Bodies; *giving account for every*

* *Luk.* 16. 26.

thing done in the Body, 2 Cor. 5. 10. And those deeds, are not what others have done for us, but what, through the Grace of God, and the Benifit of their Prayers, we have been enabled to do for our selves. *Every Man shall receive for things done in his Body, according to what he hath done*, saith St. *Paul*. And *every Mans cause of rejoycing, must be in himself alone, and not in another*, by passing over his Neighbours Prayers, or Merits to him. *For every man shall bear his own Burden*, Gal. 6. 4, 5. As a just God will not *punish* one for anothers Sin; so neither will he accept one for anothers Well-doing, *Ezek.* 18. 20.

Quest. If Sentence is so quickly passed upon them, the Souls of good men are not in a deep sleep, and insensible State, but enter upon Happiness, as the Souls of ill men do upon misery, as soon as they leave this world?

Answ. Yes, they do so. For *this day*, says our Saviour to the *Penitent Thief*, *thou shalt be with me in Paradise*, *i. e.* in a place of Happiness, *Luk.* 23. 43. And *for me to dye is gain*, saith S. *Paul*, whereas an insensible State would have brought him no Advantage, *Phil.* 1. 21. And *when we are absent from the Body, we are present with the Lord*, which presence notes happy enjoyment, 2 *Cor.* 5. 68. And *Lazarus, when he dyed, was carried into Abraham's bosom, and Dives lift up his eyes in Hell, being in Torment*, Luk. 16. 22, 23. All which shew, the Deceased Righteous

teous to be Happy, (as the Wicked Wretched,) not only in expectation, but present enjoyment.

Queſt. You ſpeak this of all the Righteous?

Anſw. Yes, for the Scripture makes no Difference. *This Day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe*, ſaid *Chriſt* to the *Penitent Thief*, tho' he had been a very great Sinner, and was but a very young Convert. And the uſual way of expreſſing the Death of good Men, is by their † *falling aſleep*, which notes Eaſe and Refreſhment. And in general it is ſaid of theſe *that dye in the Lord*, that *from henceforth they are bleſſed, and reſt from their Labours*, Rev. 14. 13. So that this *Preſent Life*, as our Lord notes in the * Story of *Lazarus*, is the Time of *their receiving evil things*: And they are no longer exerciſed with Torments, but, what is inconſiſtant with them, enter upon eaſe and comfort, in degree more or leſs, according to the difference of their virtuous Attainments, immediately upon their Deaths.

† 1 *Cor.* 15. 6,8,20,51. & 1 *Theſ.* 3. 13,14,15.

* *Luk.* 16. 25.

Queſt. But is the Happineſs of the one, or the Miſery of the other, ſo full then, as it ſhall be after the laſt Judgment?

Anſw. No; for now their Souls only are Happy, but then their Bodies ſhall be raiſed too, and the Bliſs of the whole man, both Soul and Body, ſhall be compleat. And then they ſhall be happy in a fuller degree, and have a more perfect meaſure

of it. This increaſe of Happineſs they ſhall receive at the laſt Judgment; and therefore it is † called the Time of their being *crown'd*, or rewarded, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. and they are repreſented as deſiring it. So *the Souls under the Altar, ſlain for the Teſtimony of Jeſus*, do in the *Revelations*, asking *how long* God would delay *to judge the World*, for the Conſummation of *their Reward*, and of their *Perſecutors Puniſhment*, Rev. 6. 9, 10, 11. And ſo it is with the damned Spirits too, the heavieſt part of their Doom being ſtill to come, and their preſent Miſeries, tho' very great, being but Foretaſtes and Beginnings of what they are to be conſign'd to at the laſt Day. Thus the *Devils* are ſaid *to be reſerved in Chains, againſt the Judgment of the Great Day*; their preſent State, it ſeems, in compariſon of it, being no more than the Miſery of a Priſon, compared to that of the Day of Execution, 2 Pet. 2. 4. and Jude 6. And *the Devils ask Chriſt, if he were come to torment them before the time*; plainly intimating, that the Fulneſs of their Torment was not to be, till the Great Day comes, *Mat.* 8. 29.

† Luk. 14. 14.

2 Theſſ. 1. 6, 7.

Queſt. Theſe Private Judgments then are much ſhort of the Laſt Judgment, becauſe then is the Conſummation of Reward and Puniſhment?

Anſw. Yes. And alſo, becauſe that Judgment ſhall be Solemn and Publick, in full Audience and open Court, *before Angels* and *all the World*, Luk. 12. 8, 9. and General, whereat

whereat all, both Angels and Men, ſhall be Convened and Tried.

Queſt. And muſt not this be, till the End of the World?

Anſw. No; for it is *Chriſt*'s laſt Act in Diſcharging his *Mediatory* Office, and therefore muſt not be concluded, till all Things are at an End. All the Time before the Judgment, is a State of Trial, for proving Perſons; wherein *Chriſt* gives Laws to direct us, and ſufficient Opportunities, and inward Grace, to help us to perform them. But all the Time after it, is a State of irreverſible Recompences, in ſharing and diſpenſing promiſed Rewards, and Penal Executions. After the laſt Sentence is once paſs'd, there is no more place for Interceſſions, and making Friends; but a New and Unalterable State, of Eternal Joys or Miſeries, commences. And thus *Chriſt*, having conſummated his Truſt as *Mediator*, will ſurrender up his Power, and *deliver the Kingdom to God the Father*, 1 Cor. 15. 24.

Queſt. The General Judgment, you ſay, is at the End of the World: Has God decreed a ſet Time, and fixed a Day for it?

Anſw. Yes; *he hath appointed a Day, in which he will judge the World in Righteouſneſs*, Act. 17. 31. Which Day is called *the Coming of Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 15. 23. and *the Day of the Lord*, 1 Theſſ. 5. 2. & 2 Theſſ. 2. 2.

Queſt. If every Mans Caſe muſt then be fully ſcann'd, and all Actions inquired into,

to, and Pleas heard; methinks, that ſhould be more than one Days Work?

Anſw. So I ſuppoſe it will, the continuance perhaps of a thouſand Days, nay, it may be, of a great number of Years. For *Day*, in Scripture, is any Continuance of Time, which is allotted for any Buſineſs. As the Time of *Iſraels forty Years* Travel *in the Wilderneſs*, is call'd *the Day of Temptation*, Heb. 3. 8, 9. and the Time of *God's ſcourging* and correcting, the *Day of Viſitation*, Iſa. 10. 3. & 1 Pet. 2. 12. and the *Time of the Goſpel*, is *the Day of Salvation*, 2 Cor. 6. 2. And ſo the *Day of Judgment*, is not the Space of twenty four Hours, but all that Time which *Chriſt* ſhall ſpend upon it.

Queſt. It ſeems, God has fixed the Day within himſelf; but is that determinate Day known to any beſides himſelf?

Anſw. No: For *of that determinate Day knoweth no Man, no not the Angels in Heaven, nor the Son* himſelf as Man, *but the Father only*, Mat. 24. 36. Mar. 13. 32. It ſhall ſurpriſe the World, and its coming ſhall be *ſudden* and unexpected, *as a Thief in the Night*, or *Travel upon a Woman with Child*, 1 Theſſ. 5. 2, 3.

Queſt. Who ſhall be the Judge at that Great Day, by whom all Men ſhall be tried, and ſentenced?

Anſw. Jeſus Chriſt. For *God will judge the World in Righteouſneſs, by that Man whom he hath ordain'd; and he hath aſſured them of*

it, by raiſing him from the dead, Acts 17. 31. He only is able to diſcharge this tranſcendent Truſt, having an Authority Paramount, which none can queſtion, or appeal from; an Infinite Underſtanding, that can ſearch the Hearts, and diſcover the naked Truth of every Mans Caſe, and the juſt Validity of their Pleas; an incorruptible Integrity, that cannot in the leaſt be byaſſed by any Flatteries, Offers, Intercеſſions, or Intreaties; and an Almighty Power, that can reward the greateſt Services, and puniſh the moſt high and haughty, as well as the meaneſt Criminals. And as he alone is qualified to Diſcharge, ſo he is alſo to ſuſtain the Honour of it. For who is fit to ſit as Judge of Princes and Potentates, Men and Angels; but he, who made and governs them, who is over all in Power, and next in Dignity to the Father, even the Son of God himſelf. *All Judgment is committed to the Son, that all ſhould honour the Son, even as they honour the Father*, Joh. 5. 22, 23.

Queſt. Who, at that Day, are to be judged?

Anſw. All Men, that ſhall either be found alive at his coming, or were dead before. For *we muſt all appear before the Judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, that every one may receive for the things done in the Body*, 2 Cor. 5. 10. yea, and the loſt Angels too; for *know you not that we ſhall judge Angels?* i. e. ſit with *Chriſt*, and approve of his Sentence, when he condemns them? 1 *Cor.* 6. 3. *Queſt.*

Queſt. What Proof will there be of Crimes, and who ſhall be the Witneſſes?

Anſw. The *Devils* are *the Accuſers of the Brethren*, Rev. 12. 10. and they will call for Juſtice: But there needs no Teſtimony at that Day, from *the Father of Lies*; for God, in his Omniſcience, keeps a Regiſter and Record of all Mens Actions, and *that Book ſhall be opened*, and *the Dead ſhall be judged* by that unerring *Book* of his Remembrance, *Rev.* 20. 12. Nay, indeed, there is no need of any Witneſſes at all, becauſe the Guilty ſhall confeſs their Crimes, and bear witneſs againſt themſelves: *Their Conſciences ſhall bear witneſs, and their own Thoughts accuſe, or excuſe one another, in the Day when God ſhall judge the Secrets of Men, by Jeſus Chriſt, according to my Goſpel*, Rom. 2. 15, 16.

Queſt. Shall all this be acted in great Solemnity, with Pomp and Splendour?

Anſw. Yes, as much as may be. For *Chriſt* will tranſlate his Royal Court from Heaven to Earth, and come at the Right-hand of that Glory, by which he now ſits in peerleſs Splendor and Majeſty, having all the Holy Angels glittering in their utmoſt Brightneſs, to attend this Triumph. *He ſhall come in his own Glory, and in his Fathers, and of all the Holy Angels*, Luk. 9. 26. & Mat. 25. 31. *He ſhall deſcend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Archangel, and the Trump of God*, 1 Theſſ. 4. 16. And when that ſounds, *all that are in the*

Graves shall hear his Voice, and shall come forth, Joh. 5. 28, 29. and *there shall be a Resurrection both of the Just and Unjust*, Acts 24. 15. All these *shall stand before his Throne*: And, after an exact Scrutiny, and fair Trial of all Persons, *he will separate them one from another*, into two Companies, *as a Shepherd divides the Sheep from the Goats*; and as the *Jews* were wont to do in their *Courts*, setting such as were to be *Absolv'd*, together upon *the Right*; and such as were to be *Condemn'd*, upon *the Left-hand* of their *Tribunals*: And then, with great Solemnity, pass Sentence; bidding the *Righteous*, *Come, ye Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you*: But saying to the *Wicked*, *Depart from me, ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire*, Mat. 25. 31, 32, 34, 41.

Quest. Where shall this Glorious Appearance be?

Answ. In the Air, saith St. *Paul*, 1 Thess. 4. 17. *In the Clouds of Heaven*, says our *Saviour*, Mat. 26. 64. Somewhere it will be near the Earth; but in what particular Part, it little concerns us to inquire, or advantages us to understand.

Quest. When this Great Judge has passed Sentence, shall all Parties concern'd acquiesce in it?

Answ. Yes; he is the last Judge, from whom there can be no Appeal. And there will be no need of any: For all shall acknowledge the Perfect and irreprehensible Justice of what he determines. The Righteous,

teous, being tried firſt, and call'd up to ſurround him in Glorious Circles whilſt he tries the reſt, ſhall approve and praiſe his Juſtice. *The Saints ſhall judge the World, i. e.* as his Aſſeſſors, and the Comprobators of his Judgment, 1 *Cor.* 6. 2, 3. And the Mouth of all Wicked, who ſuffer under it, ſhall be ſtopped, and they ſhall be convinced of it within themſelves. For *he will then convince all that are ungodly, of all their ungodly Deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all the hard Speeches which ungodly Sinners have ſpoken againſt him*, Jude 15.

Queſt. For what ſhall we be judged, and condemned in this Judgment?

Anſw. For all *Tranſgreſſions of the Laws of his Goſpel*, and for thoſe only. He will not judge Arbitrarily, or condemn any for unforbidden Things, or for no Cauſe but only becauſe he pleaſes: But the *Laws of his Goſpel* are the Rule he will try, and judge all Chriſtians by. *God ſhall judge Men by Jeſus Chriſt, according to my Goſpel*, Rom. 2. 16. and *the Word that I have ſpoken, the ſame ſhall judge Men at the laſt Day*, Joh. 12. 48.

Queſt. If we ſhall be condemn'd only by God's Laws, then to be ſure unforbidden Things, which are not threatned in the Word of God, and which there is no Law againſt, will never condemn any?

Anſw. Moſt certainly they will not; and there is no Sin in them to be condemned. For *where there is no Law, there is no Tranſgreſſion*,

greſſion, Rom. 4. 15. And *whoſoever commits Sin, tranſgreſſes alſo the Law; for Sin is the Tranſgreſſion of the Law*, 1 Joh. 3. 4. And *Sin is not imputed, when there is no Law*, Rom. 5. 13. So that it is a vain Fear, either in Religion, or in Common Life, when Mens Conſciences ſcruple Things, which they confeſs to be Indifferent, *i. e.* forbid by no Laws; as uſing a Form of Prayers, Kneeling, Standing, or other Rites and Ceremonies no where forbidden in the Worſhip of God. In the laſt Judgment, they ſhall anſwer only for the Breach of Laws, and therefore are ſure not to endanger their Souls, or become accountable for ſuch as theſe, ſince there is no Law againſt them.

Queſt. You ſay Men ſhall be judged for all their Tranſgreſſions of Gods Laws; then, to be ſure, for all their *Sinful Actions?*

Anſw. Yes: For *we muſt all appear before the Judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, that every one may receive according to that he hath done in the Body, whether it be good, or bad*, 2 Cor. 5. 10. And *the Dead are judged every Man according to their Works*, Rev. 20. 13.

Queſt. So that then we muſt anſwer for all the Actions of our Lives, and receive Reward if they have been good, or Puniſhment if they have been ill ones?

Anſw. Yes.

Queſt. The Actions of Men are quickly done, and when they are over, they are wont to think there is an end of them: But do not the good or ill Effects of ſeveral ſurvive,

ſurvive, and laſt long, and make for a great while after, as if the Action were ſtill a doing?

Anſw. Yes, they do, both in good and bad Actions.. So that Men may be ſinning, and ſerving God, not only whilſt they live, but when they are in their Graves.

Queſt. I pray you inſtance to me, how it is ſo in good Actions?

Anſw. If a Man gains Proſelytes to God, this good Fruit will laſt, and they will ſerve him when he is dead. If he promotes Pious Truths, or gives good Advice, or ſhews an holy Example in this World; the Truths may be remembred, and the Advice followed, and the Example copied out and imitated, when he is gone out of it. If he endows Churches, or builds Hoſpitals, or the like; his Piety will be Active when he is at Reſt, and he may be doing Good to the Worlds End. Of theſe, and all ſuch Good Works of permanent Effects, it may be ſaid, as St. *Paul* did of *Abel*'s *Faith*, whereto God gave witneſs, that *by it, he being dead, yet ſpeaketh*, Heb. 11. 4.

Queſt. And is it thus alſo in bad Actions?

Anſw. Yes. For thus the wicked Opinions a Man broaches, may infect after-Ages; or, his corrupt Example, or Advice, live in his Poſterity and Acquaintance. Or, if he corrupt and ſeduce others into any Sins, they may perſiſt in them, after he is reclaimed from them. But then he will

ſin

ſin moſt of all in his Grave, if he has introduced wicked and irreligious Laws and Cuſtoms, which are hardly altered, even where there is the plaineſt, and greateſt Reaſon for it; or abuſed the Laws, to poſſeſs himſelf of other Mens Rights, which derives down the Crime and Curſe of Detaining ill-gotten Goods, on all his Poſterity; or writ Peſtilential Books; or eſtabliſh'd any ungodly or injurious Thing, the Miſchief whereof no one knows when it may determine.

Queſt. And when God comes to judge us, will he take notice, and have reſpect to theſe continued and multiplied Effects of our Actions?

Anſw. 'Tis juſt he ſhould, they being all imputable to us, and reaſonable to believe he will. For *Jeroboam* is taxed for ſinning long after he was dead, becauſe other Mens Sins were owing to him, he having eſtabliſh'd Iniquity by a Law, and formed an Idolatrous Schiſm, and † *made Iſrael to ſin*, † 1 Kings 2 Kings 10. 29. And to this, I ſuppoſe, we may, in part at leaſt, aſcribe the *Trouble* and *Concern of Ghoſts*, and their ſometimes appearing to make Satisfaction, after any great Injuries have been done, and not repaired in their Life-time: Which may ſhew, not only God's Care, in doing Juſtice; but their own, in leſſening their Account too. On which Inducement, I believe, *Dives* was ſollicitous to have his *Brethren* advertiſed of the *Place of Torment*, 15. 29, 30, 34.

by one sent from the other World, Luke 16. 27, 28. For he being the *Head of his Family*, and a vicious Man, might have done much in corrupting his Kindred and Acquaintance, that reſorted to him. And they being made the worſe by his Example and Influence; the Growth of their Guilt, and Fructification of the ill Seed he had ſown, would accumulate and increaſe his Sufferings. Which Principle of *Self-Love*, I take to be a better Reaſon of that Care of his, than any Charity for others, for which we have cauſe to think there is no Room in that Place. For *God is Love, and he that dwells in Love, dwells in God*; which certainly they do not, who are excluded from his Preſence into that State of Torment, 1 *Joh.* 4. 16. And this ſhould make all Men careful how they broach any ill Opinions, or give others any evil Example or Advice: But eſpecially, how they introduce, or revive, or any ways ſupport Irreligious Cuſtoms, or enrich themſelves and Families by Injuſtice, or eſtabliſh any Wickedneſs, leſt thereby they ſin in their Graves, and have Power to offend God, when they have no Power to ſerve him; and continue daily adding Sin to Sin, when they can no longer repent of them. And, on the other hand, it ſhould as much encourage them in any good and uſeful Deeds; whoſe Effects, when they ſpread beyond their Expectations, or laſt beyond their Times, they may reaſonably hope that God, who is more ready to reward

reward than punish, will impute to them.

Quest. I see at the last Day Men shall be judged for the Actions of their Lives: But shall they be judged not only for their more Open and Publick, but also for their most Secret Deeds, that were committed under Concealment, and in the Dark?

Answ. Yes; *for God shall bring every Work into Judgment, with every Secret Thing, whether it be Good, or whether it be Evil,* Eccl. 12. 14. And therefore all Men are infinitely concern'd, not to commit any Wickedness under the fancied Security of Privacy, or act shamefully even in the Dark; since all those Secret Works shall then be exposed to Publick View, and they shall be put to shame, and condemned for them, before Angels and Men, all looking on.

Quest. This is most terrible to all impenitent Sinners, who will then be punish'd for these Sins. But is it not discouraging to the Righteous too, who have repented of them, and are forgiven? For their Secret Sins, which cost them so much Sorrow here, will then renew their Grief, and put them to an open Shame, if there must be such Publick Mention and Exposal of them?

Answ. No; they are in no danger of any more trouble from them: For when they are brought to light, as *Solomon* says, *God will bring every Work into Judgment, whether it be good or bad,* Eccl. 12. 14. that shall be only to set off the Impartiality of this

Scrutiny, and the Riches of Gods pardoning Mercy; but they ſhall not be upbraided with them, or leſſen'd in the eſteem, either of Glorified Angels, or of Men. For as God himſelf doth, ſo do they eſteem of Penitents, as if they had always lived innocent; and when once they have left them, forget all their former Offences, as if they had never been done. So that as to all real Effects, of their ſuffering from them, either in their own Perſons, or in the Eſtimation of others, the Sins of the Righteous at that Day, are as if they were not mention'd, but conceal'd. And this will make out thoſe Expreſſions of the *Scriptures*, which ſpeak of *the* † *Lord's not imputing Sin to them*; and, *of their Sins being cover'd*; and of * *God's remembring their Sins and Iniquities no more.* They will not be mention'd ſo as to make them either afraid, or aſhamed; which is as good as if they were wholly hid, and never mention'd at all.

† Rom. 4. 7, 8.

* Heb. 8. 12.

Queſt. Among the Deeds of Men, all thoſe are not really Good, which are ſo in outward Appearance, and which the World takes for ſuch?

Anſw. No: Several good Actions, Hypocritical Men put on only in Diſguiſe. As the *Phariſee* ſeemed to be devout in *making long Prayers*, when that was not to ſerve God, but to get Truſt among Men, that he might be able *to devour Widows Houſes* without ſuſpicion, *Mat.* 23. 14. And when

when the *Precious Ointment was powred on Christ's Head*, *Judas* pretended great *Care of the Poor*, and *cried out of the Waste* on that pretence; when, in truth, that which made him ſpeak, was not his Charity, but his Covetouſneſs, *John* 12. 5, 6. *Abſalom* pretends the *Payment of a Vow in Hebron*; but the Deſign was to execute a fore-laid *Rebellion*, 2 Sam. 15. 7, 10. Many Men pretend Kindneſs, only for Self-ends; Religion, for Secular Intereſts; the Publick Good, when they only ſeek to ſatisfie their own By-ends, or private Reſentments.

Queſt. But when under this Hypocritical Mask, Men commit ill Deeds under fair Colours, will *Chriſt* at that Day bring this Hypocriſie to Light, and condemn theſe Actions, which the Authors juſtified to the World by theſe Pretences?

Anſw. Yes: For *when the Lord cometh, he will bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs, and will make manifeſt the Counſels of the Hearts*, 1 Cor. 4. 5. *He ſhall be of quick Underſtanding, in the Fear of the Lord, and ſhall not judge after the ſight of his Eyes, nor reprove after the hearing of his Ears*; *i. e.* barely from outward Appearances; *but with Righteouſneſs ſhall he judge the Poor, and reprove with Equity* even *the Meek upon Earth*, where they are Treſpaſſers, *Iſa.* 11. 3, 4. And therefore it nearly concerns us to be ſincere in all the Goodneſs we make ſhew of, and to be the ſame to God, as we appear to be to Men: For if we diſſemble in

any thing, he will pluck off the Disguise, and shew us openly to be Hypocritical Pretenders, and disguised Sinners to all the World.

Quest. I see we shall be judged then for all our sinful Actions. But shall we judged too, for all our *sinful Omissions*?

Answ. Yes; for we are as much bound to do what God injoyns, as to forbear doing what he forbids: and at that Day, he will call us to an account for both. *Go ye Cursed into everlasting Fire*, for in my poor Members, *I felt Hunger, and ye gave me no Meat; I was Thirsty, and ye gave me no Drink; a Stranger and ye took me not in; Naked, and ye Cloathed me not; Sick, and in Prison, and ye visited me not.* All which are omissions of Duty, and for them they are Sentenced. *Mat.* 25. 41, 42, 43.

Quest. I perceive we shall be sentenced for neglecting to fulfill Laws. But will Judgment also pass upon us, for neglecting to employ, or improve our Talents?

Answ. Yes; for the Lord orders the *unprofitable Servant*, who had *hoarded* up his *Talent*, and made no gain with it, *to be cast into utter Darkness*, Mat. 25, 25, 30. And therefore it concerns all men, to whom God has given Leisure, or Power, or Wealth, or Credit, or Wit and Parts, to look upon all these as Trusts; and not to squander them away on Vice, or Vanities, Sports and Pastimes; but, as Wise and Faithful *Stewards*, to employ them all for God's service,

ſervice, remembring that all theſe were committed to them for their Maſter's uſe; and that at the laſt Day, they ſhall be called to give an account how they have ſpent them.

Queſt. What ſay you to our *words*, ſhall we be judged at the laſt Day for them too?

Anſw. Yes; for *by thy words thou ſhalt be Juſtified, and by thy words thou ſhalt be Condemned*, Mat. 12. 37. And this ſhould make all men careful, to Govern their Tongues, ſince they muſt give ſo ſtrict an account for the abuſe of them.

Queſt. Chriſt there ſays, *Men ſhall give account in the Day of Judgment, for every idle word*, v. 26. what then will become of moſt men in this world? For is not any man, that Diſcourſes with freedom, liable to utter ſomething that is Idle, that is, works no good, or makes none the better for it?

Anſw. By *Idle word* there, is to be underſtood every *Falſe* and *Slanderous* word, ſuch as the *Jews* had then caſt out againſt him, when they ſaid *he wrought Miracles through Beelzebub*, v. 24.

Queſt. But in this ſtrict Judgment, for all our ſinful Actions, and ſinful Words, will there be any account ſtill further required, for our *inward Thoughts* and *Deſires* of ill, which were never come to act?

Anſw. Yes; for at that Day, *God will*

Judge the Secrets of men, Rom. 2. 16. And *when the Lord comes* to Judgment, *he will make manifest the Counsels of the Heart*, 1 Cor. 4. 5.

Quest. But is not every man troubled, more or less, with ill Thoughts, and unlawful Desires, and like to be so, whilst we bear these Bodies about us?

Answ. Yes; for in the *Regenerate* themselves, *the Flesh Lusteth against the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 17.

Quest. How then can any man stand in the Judgment, if for these they shall be Condemned?

Answ. If the bare sudden Thoughts and Desires were Damnable, they could not. But that, for which God will then Condemn men, is not all stirring of them, but only all *yielding to fulfill them. Make no Provision for the Flesh, to fulfill the Lusts thereof*, Rom. 13. 14. And this the Righteous do not commit, or, when they do, before their Death they Repent of it, and amend it.

Quest. What will be judged *yielding to fulfill them*?

Answ. 1. All *inward Consent* to the fulfilling of them in our hearts, tho, it may be, we cannot do it for want of opportunity. For, *when Lust has thus Conceived, it bringeth forth Sin*, Jam. 1. 15. And, our Saviour says, *Adultery may be committed in the Heart*, Mat. 5. 28.

2. All *Contrivance* for the acting and

Fulfilling

Fulfilling of them, after we have conſented to them. *He that Deviſeth to do evil, ſhall be called*, and dealt with as *a miſchievous Perſon*, Prov. 24. 8. And *evil Thoughts*, that is, Murderous Machinations and Contrivances, are ranked in Guilt and Puniſhment with *Murders* themſelves, *Mat.* 15. 19.

3. All *Actual* accompliſhment of them, in Deed and Practice; which is, *fulfilling the Luſts of the Fleſh*, Gal. 5. 16. And this is more provoking ſtill, if it be in a ſettled Cuſtom, and conſtant Tenor of action, which is *walking or living after the Fleſh*, Rom. 8. 1. 4. 13.

Queſt. I perceive then, when *Chriſt* comes to Judgment, we ſhall all be called to Account, for all the ſinful Deeds we have done, and all the ſinful Words we have ſpoken, and all the evil Thoughts or Deſires we have conſented, or endeavoured to fulfill; and Condemned for them, unleſs we have ſincerely repented of them.

Anſw. Yes.

Queſt. But how will *Chriſt* proceed in Judging us for theſe Things? Will he paſs Sentence impartially, without reſpect of Perſons?

Anſw. Yes. All that are equal in Guilt, ſhall be ſure to have equal Puniſhment. For the Judge is not capable of being Byaſſed, by Fear or Favour, by any Fondneſs or Indulgence towards any Criminals, by any of their Flatteries or Compliments, Gifts or Services, their Crafty inſinuations,

ſituations, or tireſom importunities, by their Kindred or Families, Sects and Opinions. But abſolutely ſetting aſide all by-Reſpects, he will regard only the Merit of Cauſes, and what doth really influence the Caſe, and Sentence every Man according to the Evidence that lyes againſt him. At that *Revelation of his Righteous Judgment, there is no Reſpect of Perſons with God. They that have ſinned without Law, ſhall Periſh without Law; and as many as have ſinned under the Law, ſhall be Judged by the Law. God will render to every man, according to his Deeds; Eternal Life, to thoſe that have continued in well-doing; but Wrath, and Anguiſh, on every Soul that doth evil, whether* Jew, *or* Gentile, Rom. 2. 5. *to* 13. *God without reſpect of Perſons, judges as every Mans work ſhall be,* 1 Pet. 1. 17.

Queſt. But in judging upon all theſe Points, will *Chriſt* do it in Rigor, preſſing all the Punctilio's, and taking all the Advantages of Law: or will he do it with *Equity* and *Candor*, as one plainly inclined to ſhew all reaſonable favour?

Anſw. He will be the moſt *Fair*, *Equitable*, and *Candid* Judge, our Hearts can wiſh for. He is our *Judge* who is our *Advocate*, and has all along eſpouſed our Cauſe: our *Friend*, that Loved us better than his Life, and ſhed his Blood for us. So that when we are brought before him, we may promiſe our ſelves all the Favour that is conſiſtent with Juſtice.

Queſt.

Queſt. Will he favourably interpret our Performances when they come before him, and make the beſt of every thing, that it can juſtly bear, and be as ready to note what may make for us, as what may make againſt us?

Anſw. Yes; for in the Deſcription of the laſt Judgment, *Mat.* 25. he aſſigns good deeds to *thoſe on his Right-hand*, viz. the *Feeding*, and *Cloathing*, and *Viſiting* him, which in ſtrict Truth they had not done, having never ſeen him, but only by a favourable interpretation, from their having done ſo to his Brethren for his ſake, which ſhews, had they ſeen him in that want, they would much more have done it to himſelf. *Come, ye Bleſſed of my Father, for I was an hungred, and ye gave me Meat; thirſty, and ye gave me Drink*, &c. And when *they ſhall anſwer, Lord, when ſaw we thee*, to do any of theſe things for thee? He tells us he will reply, *in as much as ye have done it to the leaſt of theſe my Brethren, ye have done it unto me*, v. 34. to 41. Nay, to aſſure us further of his extraordinary Favour, in Cenſuring of his Friends; behold his marvellous Candor, in judging of the worſt Actions of his Enemies; and that too at a Time, when, if ever, he ſhould have been prone to paſs a hard Conſtruction. For, repreſenting the moſt Barbarous Murder of himſelf to God, as he hung upon the Croſs, and had a moſt pungent ſenſe of it, he imputes it to the moſt Pardonable

donable Principles, and ſays, *they acted ſo through Ignorance*, (the only poſſible thing that could be ſuggeſted for their excuſe,) cenſuring that horrid Act, which he of all Men had cauſe to make the worſt of, not as an Accuſer, but rather like a retain'd Advocate, *Luk.* 23. 34. Thus, *in that Day*, will the moſt benign Judge be of Counſel for all the Priſoners, and ſpye all their Virtues, and make the beſt he reaſonably can of every bad Caſe. And, as for good Men, he will impute their Failures to the moſt pardonable Cauſes, and Remember their good Services when they have forgot them, ſetting them off by a kind interpretation, and thinking better of them, than their own Humility and Modeſty would allow themſelves to do.

Queſt. But what ſay you, to the ſeeming Rigor of his own Laws, which require us to † *Love and ſerve him, with all our Heart and ſtrength*? And if this be drawn out to a full ſtretch, and ſtrained to mean our utmoſt Poſſibilities, no Candor to our Performances, can conſtrue them to come up to this pitch.

† *Deut.* 6. 5. *Mat.* 22. 37.

Anſw. The ſeeming Rigor of that Expreſſion, he will interpret with great condeſcenſion to the Meaſures of Men. He will reaſonably allow, and abate, for our many Temptations and Diſtracting Thoughts, our Natural Backwardneſs, and Forgetfulneſs, and other Frailties ſo incident to our preſent State and Circumſtances.

ſtances. And when all that is candidly deducted, the reſt, which in our Circumſtances we are honeſtly and fairly able to Do, will paſs for ſerving him with all the heart and ſtrength, according to the Commandment.

Queſt. How will you make that out?

Anſw. Becauſe the *Scripture* Declares, he will *bear in Reaſon with our Infirmities*, Heb. 5. 2. And becauſe he has done ſo in ſeveral judged Caſes, expreſly declaring of ſeveral, that they have kept this Commandment, when they needed theſe abatements. Thus, of *Aſa* it is ſaid, that *his Heart was Perfect before God*, 1 King. 15. 14. And of *David*, that *he followed God with his whole Heart*: Yea, that *he turned not aſide from any thing he commanded him, all his days, except in the matter of Uriah.* 1 King. 14 8. and c. 15. 5. And of *Joſiah*, that *he did that which was right in the ſight of the Lord, neither declining to the Right Hand, nor to the left*, 2 King. 22. 2. And of *Zachariah* and *Elizabeth*, that *they walked before God, in all the Ordinances of the Law, Blameleſs*, Luk. 1. 6. Now all theſe were Perſons of our own Frailties, and Infirmities. They were defective in their Care, as we are; and, though they went beyond the pitch of others, yet fell below the utmoſt of their poſſibilities, as the *Scriptures* have recorded of them, in † ſeveral inſtances. They ſerved God, indeed, *with all their Souls*, in one ſenſe of the Precept,

† 2 *Chron.* 16. *ver.* 1, 10, 13.

1 *Sam.* 21 1, 2. 2 *Sam.* 19. 29. 2 *Chron.* 35 21, 22, 23.

cept, as that notes their *adhering only to his Worship*, and allowing no part of their Heart to any *Idol God*. But, as it notes the *intireneſs of Degrees* in ſerving him: Such failings, as were pardonable under humane Circumſtances and infirmities, were firſt taken out, and ſo much as they were able to do after that abatement, was judged their *ſerving God with all their Heart*, according to the Commandment.

Queſt. Will *Chriſt* then after he has thus made the moſt of their good Performances, make *reaſonable Allowances* alſo for mens *Slips* and *Failures*, either in committing ill, or in omitting Good things?

Anſw. Yes; when they fail in either, through ſome *innocent*, and *well meant Error*, or *Ignorance*: Or when they ſlip through pure haſte and unadviſedneſs, and are ſurprized into ſome ill Thoughts, or ſudden Paſſions, or raſh words, but correct themſelves as ſoon as they conſider what they have done, and do not continue in it with Obſervation. He will then have Compaſſion on theſe, when he comes as our Judge; as now he has, when he acts as our Prieſt, and intercedes for us. For as the *Jewiſh* Prieſts had, ſo *can he have compaſſion on the Ignorant, and Erroneous*, or, as the † word notes, he can *Suffer in moderation*, or *reaſonably bear with them*, Heb. 5. 2.

μετριοπαθῆν.

Queſt. But what if men are Ignorant, becauſe they neglect to learn their Duty, nay, perhaps ſtop their Eyes and Ears, and Refuſe to ſee, or be told of it? *Anſw.*

Anſw. Then that will be no excuſe to them, where they fail of performing it, they being, as St. *Peter* ſays, *willingly Ignorant*, 2 Pet. 3. 5.

Queſt. I perceive he will ſhew Favour towards our involuntary Failures. But this will not avail us, if he be Strict and Rigorous in judging of that Involuntarineſs. For, alas! what man doth all that is Poſſible, to prevent Ignorance, or Surprize? And if we do not all we can againſt them, he may ſay they come through our own wills and ſufferance, if he will judge in Strictneſs. Will he therefore ſhew Candor, in judging any eſcapes to be Pitiable, and unwill'd Miſcarriages; without which, all his Candor in other Things will not ſupport us in his Preſence?

Anſw. Yes. He will ſhew all Reaſonable Favour, in admitting Actions for involuntary, that a Child could expect from a Wiſe and Tender Father, or we experiment from one another. A marvellous Inſtance we have of his Proneneſs to make the beſt of ill Actions, in aſcribing his own Crucifixion, as is noted, to the *Jews* Ignorance, which ſeemed ſo lyable to be imputed to Envy, Malice, and ſuch other more inexcuſable Principles. Thus benign he was upon the Croſs, and he will be no leſs ſo when he appears in Court. He will only have more Glory and Power, not leſs Benignity and Candor there alſo.

Queſt.

Queſt. Chriſt our Judge, it ſeems, will very graciouſly bear with our involuntary failings. But will he bear alſo with any *willful Sins*, when we tranſgreſs wittingly, or againſt our Conſciences?

Anſw. No; for *whatever ill proceeds out of the Heart of man, defiles the man*, Mat. 15. 18. And tho innocent Ignorance plead ſome excuſe; yet *when a man knows to do good, and doth it not, to him 'tis Sin*, Jam. 4. 17. But if they truly Repent of theſe, and amend them before their Death, they ſhall not be Condemned for them at that great Day.

Queſt. O! how happy are we in this marvellous Clemency and Candor of our Judge, who will be ſo ready to make the moſt of our Good Deeds, and to connive at our ignorant and involuntary Failings, and to paſs over all our wilful Sins themſelves, upon our true Repentance.

But beſides theſe ignorant and inconſiderate Failings, have we not many other *Natural Infirmities*, that will need his Clemency and Favour towards us?

Anſw. Yes; the Natural Uncertainty of our Tempers; our Dulneſs in any Duties, more eſpecially at ſome times; our Diſtractions and wandring Thoughts in Prayers; our Deſires of Praiſe, and other indirect Aims, intruding into our beſt Actions; our Natural Backwardneſs to Good; our Remiſneſs and Faintneſs in performing it, and our being ſoon wearied with it; our Weakneſs

Weakneſs of Faith, in believing the unſeen Things God has promiſed; our great Adherence to Worldly and Senſible Things; and our Unaffectedneſs with Spiritual and Divine Objects, and the like. Theſe are Infirmities incident to the beſt Men, and will cling to us more or leſs, as long as we bear theſe Bodies about us, and converſe with the Things of this World.

Queſt. And will our Equitable and Benign Judge, ſhew favour to theſe infirmities, which are ſo inſeparable from our Natures?

Anſw. Yes. Were he only God, we might be more prone to fear, he would look more at the juſt Demand of God's Laws, and be little *touch'd with our Infirmities*, which hinder us from fully anſwering them. But for this very end he took our Nature upon him, ſubmitting to our infirmities, and conflicting with our Temptations, that having felt and experimented them in himſelf, he might be more feelingly tender, and Compaſſionate towards them in us. *He is ſuch an High-Prieſt*, ſaith the *Apoſtle*, *as is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, having been tempted as we are in all Points, tho' without Sin. Therefore let us come with Boldneſs to the Throne of Grace*, Heb. 4. 15, 16. *It behoved him*, ſays he again, *to be made like unto his Brethren in all things, that he might be*, as *Faithful* to God, ſo *merciful* to us, and *having been Tempted himſelf*, be the readier to

Consider, and *Succour* our infirmities and *Temptations*, Heb. 2. 17, 18. This sense of our infirmities, makes him, now he acts in Heaven as our *High-Priest*, most compassionately to recommend them to God's mercy. And the same sense he will have of them, when he sits upon us as our *Judge*, and then we may be sure, he will Graciously Dispense that mercy towards them which before he interceded for.

Quest. Besides these Natural infirmities, we are sorely kept back by many *supervening Disadvantages*. Particularly, by multiplicity of Business; which causes much distraction of Thoughts, and Haste in Dispatch, whence arise many Errors. By the greatness of Temptations; as when we are hastily driven to do ill, through some great and sudden Terrours, or urgent necessities, to secure our Lives, or sustenance. And by our Bodily indispositions; as when Sickness, or habitual Pain and uneasiness, or a continual succession of cross Accidents and Provocations, make us Peevish and impatient, or betray us into other rash miscarriages. And will our Candid favourable Judge, make abatements for these *Providential disadvantages*?

Answ. Yes; all just and reasonable abatements he will exactly consider, and fairly and equitably allow for them. *They that sinned without Law*, saith S. *Paul*, *shall be judged without Law*, that is, with such abatements, as are allowable to those, who

who wanted the Law; not according to ſuch ſtricter Terms, as are reaſonably exacted of all, who enjoy'd it, *Rom.* 2. 12. *The time of Heathen ignorance*, ſaith he again, *God winked at*: expecting leſs from thoſe, who had the great diſadvantage of walking in the dark, *Act.* 17. 30. Where theſe diſadvantages betray men into haſte, and inadvertence, and a pitiable involuntarineſs, he will graciouſly connive at them, as he did at † St. *Paul*'s undutifulneſs to *Ananias*, upon a ſudden provocation; and *Job*'s many fretful expoſtulations, under a moſt uneaſie Body, and heavy Afflictions; and where they bring guilt, by drawing us in to yield, and conſent to thoſe ſins, whereto they expoſe us; on their account he will exact the leſs, and ſuch ſins will be ſooner expiated, and the Judge eaſilier ſatisfied, with a more moderate Repentance. † Act. 23. 2, 3, 5.

Queſt. That which through the merits of *Chriſt*, muſt gain us acceptance, is our good deeds. But may not the beſt of us all find defects enow even in theſe?

Anſw. Yes. Our Zeal for God is not all Flame, and inexhauſtible activity, as St. *Paul*'s was. We are not ſo prompt and forward in any act of Love to our dear Lord, as St. *Peter*; ſo ſlow to Anger, as *Moſes*; ſo perſevering in Patience, as *Job*; ſo intirely affected with Divine Things, and formed after Gods own Heart, as *David*. When we attain to be ſubmiſſive un-

der Croſſes, perhaps we do not arrive, with any great affectionateneſs, to thank God for them: tho' we contentedly bear reproaches for *Chriſt*; yet, it may be, we cannot take pleaſure in them, nor Count Poverty for his ſake, the trueſt Riches; or Labour and Travel, an eaſe; or Stripes and Impriſonments, a Triumph; or the Croſs, a Crown; like the Holy *Apoſtles*. When we do God's will, we are not ſo intent upon it, nor ſo ſenſibly delighted with it, as with our meat and drink, like our *Bleſſed Saviour*: we want that pitch of contempt for worldly things, and of command over our own Appetites; that height of Abſtinence and Self-denyal; that eaſe, delight, and watchfulneſs in Prayer; that Aſſiduity and Pleaſure in Divine Meditations; that depth of Humility, and poverty of Spirit; that fervour of Charity; that promptneſs to ſhew kindneſſes, and gladneſs in doing them; that backwardneſs to admit of Provocation; that eaſineſs in forgetting, and remitting injuries, which ſome of God's Saints have happily enjoy'd, and for which they have been moſt highly Rewarded.

Queſt And will not this failure of Degrees in good things, need a like Indulgence from this compaſſionate and benign Judge?

Anſw. Yes, and find it too. For theſe heighths and eminent degrees of Virtue, he propoſes to all, with more reſplendant Crowns of Glory to recompence them, and

and noble examples that lead on to them; but not as *indiſpenſable Articles of Salvation.* They are required as Things, which are hard for any to attain, praiſe worthy to attempt, and pardonable to miſs of them. They are Gems, that adorn and ſet off; or Radiant Crowns, which ſurround the brighteſt Stars; but Stars they are ſtill, which want theſe Glories.

Queſt. By this, there muſt be a great Latitude in virtuous attainments on the ſide of Bliſs, and *Chriſt* will not ſcrew up all he ſaves to the ſame certain Standard of perfection, or require them all to be of the ſame ſize?

Anſw. No; the Tenor of the Law it ſelf, is only to *obey God with* † *all our ſtrength:* but that ſtrength is more in ſome, than it is in others. There are *weak,* as well as *ſtrong,* among *Chriſt's* accepted Servants. And as different Magnitudes among the Glorified Saints, as there are among the *Sun, Moon,* and *Stars,* in the Prophet † *Daniels,* and St. † *Pauls*; or the different *Rooms* and *Manſions* of a Stately Palace, in our *Bleſſed* † *Lords* reſemblance. Nay, St. *Paul* could ſay, *he labour'd more abundantly than they all,* even among the *Bleſſed Apoſtles* themſelves, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. Thus do very widely diſtant, and unequal virtues, all meet in the place of Bliſs, and are each Beatified in their ſeveral Proportions. *He that ſoweth much, ſhall reap much; and he that ſoweth little ſhall reap little,* ſaith the

† Luk. 10. 27.

† Dan. 12. 3.

† 1 Cor. 15 41, 42.

† Joh. 14. 2.

Apoſtle, but both are to reap ſomething, 2 *Cor.* 9. 6. And in the *Parable* † *according to their ſeveral Abilities*, one Servant improved his *Pound* to ten *Pounds*, Luk 19. 16. *another* his, to five *Pounds*, v. 18. and a *third*, only *doubled* his, Mat. 25. 22. But yet all theſe were welcomed, with a *well done, thou Good and Faithful Servant.* And as he that gain'd *Ten Pounds*, had *the Rule over ten Cities*; and he who gain'd *five*, had *Authority over five Cities*: ſo he, that only *doubled his Talents*, was recompenſed with a proportionable Reward, *Luk.* 19. 17, 19. and *Mat.* 25. 22, 23.

† Mat. 25. 15.

Queſt. I ſee *Chriſt* will not require us all, to be as tall in Spiritual ſtature as *Apoſtles*, but will graciouſly accept of inferiour virtues, and encourage them with proportionable Recompences. But what will you ſay, if even theſe ſmall and ſlender things, are performed with much *Difficulty* and *Reluctance*? It may be, in the little good we do, we are not forward to catch at good motions, nor preſently yield to a virtuous Diſcourſe, or good Advice, but adhere a while to our own ſelf-will, chiefly in caſes againſt our own humour, inclinations or former opinions, though we do the thing at laſt, after ſome diſputings with our ſelves. And will this gracious Judge accept of ſuch ſlow, and backward ſervices?

Anſw. Yes; he that ſtood out at firſt, and *ſaid he would not go work in the Vineyard*, but

but *after* he had better conſidered of it, *repented, and went*, is judged by our Saviour to be of the number of thoſe, that *do the will of his Father*, Mat. 21. 29, 31. Eaſineſs, and alacrity in cloſing with good, is a perfection of virtue, and ſhall receive a greater Recompence. But if we obey at all, though it be with Reluctance and Diſputings, we ſhall be in the Liſt of Servants, and not of Rebels, and receive rewards ſtill, though in ſmaller Proportions. Albeit *the Fleſh luſt againſt the Spirit*, yet if *we do not fulfill its Luſts*, but the Spirit prevails, *we walk in the Spirit*, and are truly *Regenerate*, as St. *Paul* ſays, *Gal.* 5. 16, 17.

Queſt. But, alas! the little good we do is not only thus defective in degrees, but is oft-times polluted by *impure mixtures*. When we do an act of honour to God, for inſtance, we are too apt, perhaps, to make it ſerve our own vanity more or leſs, and to ſeek thereby our own Praiſe. In cenſuring and reproving others Vices, it may be, in ſome degree, we gratifie our own peeviſhneſs, or other corrupt paſſions. And ſo in other Caſes. And can we expect any reward at the hands of this Benign Judge, for ſuch impure Services?

Anſw. Yes; through his infinite mercy and goodneſs. He is ſo Candid, and inclined to make the moſt of what is good, that he is ready to overlook ſome compaſſionable and leſſer ill, which is twiſted with it; paſſing by the ill, when they are

humbled and ſorry for it; and not throwing away the good for the evil's ſake. Thus in the mixt action of the *Egyptian Midwives*; he *commends*, and *rewards* their *Pious Charity*, and paſſes over their *Officious falſeneſs*, Exod. 1. 19, 20, 21. And in *Rahab*'s caſe, he recompences her *Faith in the true God*, and *friendſhip for the Spyes*, and winks at the inſincerity of her *feign'd excuſe*, Jam. 2. 25. and Joſh. 2. 4, 5, 9. yea, in cenſuring, not only the virtues, but the liberties of men, when they are juſtifiable in the main, but culpable in ſome pitiable circumſtance, he is apt to obſerve in the Action what may bear it out, and when they are humbled for the reſt, to draw a vail over what may pitiably be connived at: as our Lord did in mentioning *David*'s *eating of the Shew-bread*, vindicating him on account of that neceſſity which authorized, not cenſuring him on account of that falſhood whereby he procured it, *Mat.* 12. 3, 4.

Queſt. But is it not ſaid, that if we *Pray*, or *give Alms*, or *Faſt*, for the *Praiſe of men*, *we ſhall loſe our reward*, Mat. 6. 2, 5, 16.

Anſw. Yes; when the main deſign of our Prayers, or Alms, or other good Deeds, is to be commended, and we ſhould not do them but in hopes of that. For in Acting Principally for commendations ſake, we ſerve our own Pride and Vanity, but do not ſerve God. But when our chief aim

aim in it, is to pleaſe God, he accepts a Good work, though ſome pitiable defect adhere, or pardonable faultineſs be unwarily let in and combined with it.

Queſt. But in contemplating all this Indulgence of our Judge, we muſt not think his favour will paſs into fondneſs, which will bear with all we do, and ſpy no faults in us?

Anſw. No; as he is a good and candid, † μετριοπαθής. ſo, as I noted before, is he a moſt Righteous and juſt Judge. What he will give to *our infirmities*, St. *Paul* calls † *moderate* and *reaſonable allowance*, Heb. 5. 2. He bears in him the moſt exact temperament of Mercy, and Severity: being moſt prone to Mercy, in every compaſſionable Caſe; and as inexorably bent on Juſtice, where 'tis reaſonable, and fit ro inflict Vengeance.

Queſt. You have ſhewn me, that *Chriſt* will uſe all this Candor in conſtructions, and make theſe favourable Allowances when we are brought to his Bar upon our Tryals. Would he not have us in the mean time, to promiſe to our ſelves, and expect all this?

Anſw. Yes; or elſe conſidering the infirmities and defects of moſt, if not of all his Followers, we could never have any comfortable hope in him; much leſs ſo great, as to deſire, and *Pray for his Appearance.* And yet the *Apoſtles* give this, as the Character of good and acceptable Chriſtians,

Chriſtians, who may therefore hope to be made happy, when they are qualified for it according to Humane meaſures. The *Crown of Righteouſneſs is for me, and all that love his appearing*, ſaith St. *Paul*, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. *Look for, and*, by your Prayers, *haſte on the coming of the great Day of God*, ſaith St. *Peter*, 2 Pet. 3. 12. *Come, Lord Jeſus, come quickly*, ſaith St. *John*, Rev. 22. 20. And in our daily Prayers, our Lord himſelf has taught us, *every day* to ſay, *thy Kingdom come.*

Queſt. Are we not indebted for all this indulgence, to the merit of his Death?

Anſw. Yes; for *we are accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have Redemption through his Blood*, Eph. 1, 6. 7. And owing all to him, we muſt both *Pray*, and *give thanks* for it *in his Name*, Joh. 14. 13. & Eph. 5. 20.

Queſt. All theſe acts of favour you have recited, are marvellous inſtances of Gods clemency to all his faithful Servants; and the Goſpel, I ſee encourages us to expect them at his hands. But are we ſure at that Day, God will ſtand to theſe Goſpel Terms?

Anſw. Yes; moſt ſure. For he never repents of his promiſes, nor can deny himſelf. Beſides, the ſame *Jeſus*, who once came from God to make us theſe gracious offers, is then to come and Judge us according to them, and make good his own Propoſals. Nay, ſince there may ſeem the ſame Reaſon, for his retaining them on

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to the conſummation, as for his reſuming them at the Reſurrection, he may probably come, as ſome of the *Ancients* have thought, with the Glorious Scars of the Spear and Nails, and the ſigns of his Meritorious wounds, which purchaſed all this Grace, about him. And then, as all the Wicked † *ſhall look on him whom they have pierced*, with horror and conſternation: ſo ſhall the Righteous, with unſpeakable comfort, moſt joyfully beholding in his wounds, both the heighth of their moſt dear and compaſſionate Judge's Love, and the Price and aſſurance of their own Salvation. †Rev. 1. 7.

Queſt. This indulgence of our Almighty Judge, will be an inexhauſtible Fountain of raviſhing joy and comfort, to all ſerious and conſiderate minds. And, indeed, without ſuch clemency as you have deſcribed, the thoughts of the future judgment, muſt needs be a very melancholly conſideration to the beſt Perſons. But expecting ſo much Candor and Benignity from him, they have cauſe enough, not only to look for, but to love and deſire his appearing. But what ſhall be the effect of all this to good men?

Anſw. They ſhall be ſentenced to an Everlaſting Life, and Rewarded with all the Glory, and Happineſs of an Eternal Kingdom. For having fairly, and impartially heard their Cauſe, and made all theſe Allowances, and found them Righteous, he will ſay to them, *Come ye Bleſſed*

ſed Children of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the Beginning of the World, Mat. 25. 34.

Queſt. And in that Allotment, and Proportioning of Rewards, will he conſider the Difficulties, and Oppoſitions in Doing Good, which ſome Men meet withal above others?

Anſw. Yes. As theſe Tryals and Temptations, are Proofs of a greater Love, they will in proportion be a Ground of a Greater Reward. Thus St, *Paul* ſays, the *adding of Affliction to his Bonds*, or Multiplying his Trouble in *preaching of the Word*, would ſurely *turn to his greater Salvation* in the End, *Phil.* 1. 16, 19.

Queſt. Will he alſo conſider the Coſtlineſs of it, as when 'tis done, with hazard, or Loſs of their Friends or Eſtates, or, it may be, of their Lives?

Anſw. Yes; one ſingle Act under ſuch hazards, may ſhew as much Religious Love and Zeal, as would ſuffice to great Numbers, when they are free from ſuch incumbrances. When we obey God with preſent Damage, he will not only conſider our Services, but our Loſs in his Cauſe; and recompence abundantly, not only all we did, but likewiſe all we ſuffered for him. For *every one that forſakes Houſes, or Brethren, or Siſters, or Father, or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or Lands, for my Name's ſake*, ſays our Saviour, *ſhall receive* therefore *an hundred fold*, Mat 19. 29. And *the*

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Martyrs that were beheaded for the Witneſs of Jeſus, ſhall riſe firſt, and Reign with Chriſt a thouſand years; but the Reſt of the Dead, not till the thouſand years are finiſhed, Rev. 20. 4, 5. And therefore whenſoever God calls Men to ſuffer for Righteouſneſs, they muſt not look upon it as a Calamitous Scourge; but as a Favour and Priviledge, ſuch Suffering being ſent, in Truth, as opportunities of accumulating Bliſs, and ſecuring to themſelves, not only more ample, but, when their Sufferings proceed to Blood, more early ſhares of the Future Glories. *To you 'tis given*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *in the behalf of Chriſt, not only to believe on him, but alſo to ſuffer for his ſake*, Phil. 1. 29. *Count it all joy*, ſaith St. *James*, *when you fall into diverſe Temptations*, Jam. 1. 2. *When you are Reviled, and Slandered, and Perſecuted for Righteouſneſs ſake*, ſays our Saviour, then think your ſelves *Bleſſed, and Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for your Reward in Heaven ſhall be great* for it, Mat. 5. 10, 11, 12. As the *Apoſtles* did, who, *when the Council had beaten them, departed from their Preſence, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame for Chriſt's Name*, Act. 5. 40, 41. And the *Hebrews*, who *took joyfully the ſpoiling of their Goods, as knowing they had in Heaven a better and more Durable Subſtance*, Heb. 10. 34.

Queſt. But numbers of the Evils we endure, come not on us for keeping God's Commandments, but only as our ſhare of that

that Misery and Trouble, which God has allotted for us in this Life. And will he at that Day Rate these, and consider any persons having endured more Poverty, Oppression, Shame, or Sickness in this World, than other good Persons, who yet are no better, nor Dearer to God, than themselves?

Answ. I suppose he will; for he is *no Respecter of Persons.* And therefore when Persons of equal, or higher Goodness, through the present ordering of his Providence, want much of their Brethrens Temporal Encouragements, they may hope for a more Liberal share in a better place. For his extraordinary Measure of *Evil things*, in this *present time*, *Lazarus* had a proportionable surplusage of *Good*, in *Abraham's Bosom*, Luk. 16. 24. *Blessed are ye that* live in *Poverty*, and *Hunger now*, says our Saviour, *for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh.* Noteing thereby, such an ample Recompence for these present Evils in the next World, as would render them to all good Men, not the Miseries, as this World esteems them, but the truest Favours, and Gainful Blessings of their Lives, Luke 6. 20, 21. This seeming inequality of Gods present Distributions, which lies upon Providence, will then be cleared up by a full and Liberal Amends. For *then*, *God's Righteousness in Judgment*, that in great part lay hid before, will be fully *Revealed* and made manifest, *Rom.* 2. 5.

Quest.

Queſt. But when he deals thus graciouſly with all the good, how will he proceed with *ill Men*?

Anſw. In all the equity of a fair Tryal, but yet to a juſt Condemnation. When he bears with all Natural Infirmities, and reaſonably abates for outward Impediments, and connives at involuntary Failings, and forgives all the ſins of the Penitents; he will avenge the willful Sins of all impenitent Perſons, according to their Deſerts. For *he will judge the World in Righteouſneſs*, Act. 17. 31. *To the wicked, he will ſay, Depart from me ye workers of iniquity*, Mat. 7. 23. And when *they, that have done Good, come forth to the Reſurrection of Life; they that have done Evil, ſhall come to the Reſurrection of Damnation*, Joh. 5. 29.

Queſt. What Puniſhment ſhall theſe Miſerable Men be condemned to?

Anſw. All the Plagues of *Hell*, where their Spirits ſhall always be gnawed and preyed upon, by the Worm of Conſcience; and their Bodies ſcorched with Fire and Flames. *Go ye curſed into everlaſting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels*, Mat. 25. 41. Yea, they ſhall have all the ſmart of Fire, where 'tis the hotteſt: being *caſt into a Furnace of Fire*, Mat. 13. 42. and *into a Lake of Fire, burning with Brimſtone*, Rev. 19. 20. And *there*, as *the Fire is not quenched*, ſo *their Worm* of Conſcience *Dyeth not*, Mar. 9. 44.

Queſt. And when ſhall all theſe Dreadful Miſeries ſeize them? *Anſw.*

Answ. So soon as this Terrible Sentence, of *Go ye Cursed into everlasting Fire*, is solemnly passed upon them. For his way of Effecting things, is by his Omnipotent Word. When he said, *let there be Light*, or *Earth*, immediately there was so at *first*, Gen, 1. 3, 9. And when he shall say, *go ye Cursed into everlasting Fire*, in obedience to that all-powerful Word, streight-way a Fire shall come forth from his Presence, and shall seize on the whole Earth, and Air, where his Adversaries Abode is, and set it all on fire about them, turning all this lower World, which probably thenceforwards is to serve for no other use, into one intire Globe of Fire, or Flaming Furnace. The Fire that shall Torment and Scorch the Damned, at *the coming of our Lord, shall burn up the Earth, and melt the Elements*, and Crack *the Heavens*, making them *dissolve, and pass away with a Great Noise*, says St. *Peter*, 2 Pet. 3. 10, 12. *The Heavens, and Earth that are now*, says he again, *are kept in store, and reserved unto Fire, against the Day of Judgment, and Perdition of Ungodly Men*; the Fire that shall break out from God upon the Ungodly, being, it seems, to seize and dissolve them, *ver.* 7. And *the Fire that comes down from God, to devour and torment the Devil, and all he has deceived, Day and Night, for ever*; shall make *the Earth and Heaven that now is, flee away*, as may seem from St. *John*, and leave nothing, *but a devouring Hell*, or a

World

World of never Dying Fire and Flame, in its place, *Rev.* 20. 9, 10, 11, 14. and c. 21. 1. And when once this is kindled, those forelorn Wretches may † cry in vain to *the Hills to fall on them*, and *to the Rocks to cover them.* For every Cave is then a Furnace, and every high Hill a Flaming Mountain: a Fervent Heat has melted all the World, and nothing is to be felt or seen, but boyling Element, and scorching Fire all about them. † *Rev.* 6. 15, 16.

Quest. Oh! the wonder of God's Mercy, which shall then be displayed towards all his Saints, and the Terror of his Judgments, which shall then be inflicted on all incorrigible Offenders! Must not this expectation of *Christ's future Judgment* of us, for all our Actions, make us very careful how we lead our Lives?

Answ. Yes; it should do it above all things. We must account for all our Thoughts, Words, and Actions. And an Eternity of highest Bliss, or Woe, depends upon the account we make. And therefore we had need to do all things here with such care, that when we are taken to task at that Great Day, we may give in a good, and comfortable account of them. Seeing God will be more terrible in punishing all ungodly Sinners, *what manner of Persons ought we to be, in all holy Conversation, and Godliness*, 2 Pet. 3. 11, 12.

Quest. That day, you say, will surprize the World, as a *Thief in the Night*, and it

is moſt uncertain to every Man, when he ſhall be called to it. Ought not that to make us every day ſecure our Peace with God, and watch always to be in a *readineſs*, and *preparation* for that great Account?

Anſw. Yes; there is no room for preparation afterwards, if we are unprepared when he calls, as the *Fooliſh Virgins* experienced to their coſt. *Watch therefore, for ye know neither the Day, nor the Hour, wherein the Son of Man cometh*, Mat. 25. 11, 12, 13.

Queſt. Since *Chriſt* has reſerved the judgment of all Men to himſelf, who beſt knows, and who alone is able unerringly to judge of them: Muſt not this make us wary, not to judge and cenſure one another?

Anſw. Yes, by all means; for this Judgment he eſteems an uſurpation upon his Office. *Why doeſt thou judge thy Brother, or why doeſt thou ſet at naught thy Brother? We ſhall all ſtand at the Judgment Seat of Chriſt*, Rom. 14. 10. *Who art thou that Judgeſt another Man's Servant? To his own Maſter he ſtands, or falls*, ver. 4. Nay, he tells us, as we have no Authority to do it, ſo we are unfit for it, becauſe we cannot ſee each others Hearts; and ſo, in many Cenſures we paſs, can have no true Judgment of Men, and Actions, as he has. *Judge nothing before the Time, until the Lord come, who will bring to Light the hidden things of Darkneſs,*

neſs, and make manifeſt the Counſels of the Hearts, 1 Cor. 4. 5.

Queſt. And ſince God will clear the Innocent, before Men and Angels, and in his judgment ſet all right at laſt: Is not this a ſupport to us, under all the unjuſt Slanders, and wrongful Judgments we meet with here in this World?

Anſw. Yes; for it ſhews all will be fully wiped off, if we can have a little patience. Our Innocence ſhall ſhine the brighter, for the Vail that was drawn before it, as the Sun doth when he recovers from a Cloud: For then *God ſhall bring forth our Righteouſneſs as the Light, and our Judgment as the Noon-day*, Pſal. 37. 6. So that in ſuch Caſes, we may all ſay, as St. *Paul, it is a very ſmall thing with me, that I ſhould be judged of Mans Judgment*, becauſe *he that judgeth me is the Lord*, who will ſhortly reverſe all the Errors of Mens Cenſures, and ſhew them Publickly to all the World, 1 Cor. 4. 3, 4.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Holy Ghoſt.

The Contents.

The Holy Ghoſt is God. What he hath done for our Salvation. Of his extraordinary Gifts beſtowed on Apoſtles and Evangeliſts, which were for the Planting, and Propagating Chriſt's Religion. 1. The gift of inſpiration, in Revelations. This beſtowed upon the Apoſtles. Theſe Revelations they have fully ſet down in the Holy Scriptures, after which we are not to look for any others. This Gift, of knowing Religion by immediate Revelation, neceſſary only in Apoſtles, and Evangeliſts. And deſign'd for the Infancy of the Church. Other Rules, whereby to examine new Lights and Revelations in Religion. As, try them by the Scriptures. Call for their Miracles, wherewith God ſtill empower'd men, when he ſent them to reveal new Things. No need of Miracles, when men pretend only to revive old, and acknowledged Revelations. If they ſhew Miracles, for things plainly againſt Scripture, they muſt work more, than were wrought to confirm the Scripture. An account of Joel 2. 28, 29. Which ſeems to foretell the commonneſs of Revelations among Chriſtians. The firſt Inſpirations were not only in Doctrinal Points, but alſo

in

in Devotions. And about Temporal matters. Subſervient to this Gift of Revelations, was the Gift of diſcerning Spirits. This done afterwards by ordinary Rules. And the Gift of utterance and boldneſs. Their minds not influenced by this conſtantly, and at all Times. But ordinarily they were, and eſpecially when they had moſt need of it. 2. Of the Gift of Miracles. Miracles a Proof of Divine Revelation. How diſcernible from Lying Wonders, by the Doctrines built on them. By their ends and uſefulneſs, and being wrought on needful Occaſions. Of the miraculous Gift of healing Diſeaſes. This ſometime by anointing with Oyl. And Prayers. Of caſting out Devils, and other Miracles. Of delivering to Satan, what it was, and why ſo call'd. Of Joy in Tribulations, and what was extraordinary in that of the Apoſtles. To the working theſe Miracles, there was always required Faith in him that wrought them. And ſometimes Faith in him that received them. 3. of the Gift of Strange Tongues. The ends of this. And of the Gift of Interpreting ſuch Strange Tongues. What is meant by the Holy Ghoſt being a Comforter. The Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, is a Sin againſt theſe extraordinary Gifts. Why Blaſphemy againſt him more irremiſable, than againſt the Father or the Son. Extraordinary Gifts no mark of a juſtified State. Of Offices appointed by the Holy Ghoſt. Some of

theſe Temporary, others to continue through all Times, the preſent Officers ordaining Succeſſors of the Holy Ghoſt's ordinary Graces. By theſe we may know he dwells in us. Our care required towards theſe. Of Preventing Grace in outward advantages, and inward good motions. Directions how we are to endeavour after ſaving Graces, in ſix Particulars. How God gives them, though we are thus to acquire them. The Holy Ghoſt works alſo in us Spiritual Joys and Comforts. This he doth not in all the minds he ſanctifies, becauſe ſome are unfit for them through intrinſick impediments. But they are withheld from none, through his Arbitrary withdrawing, which ſome count Spiritual Deſertion.

Queſt. WHat is the *eighth* Article of the *Creed*?

Anſw. I *Believe in the Holy Ghoſt*.

Queſt. Is the Holy Ghoſt very God?

Anſw. Yes. *For Lying to the Holy Ghoſt*, is call'd *Lying to God*, Act. 5. 3, 4. And † 1 *Cor.* 2. 10, 11. becauſe *Chriſtians* are the Temple *of the Holy Ghoſt*, they are ſaid to be *the Temple* * *Pſ.* 139. 7. *of God*, 1 Cor. 3. 16. And all the Properties of Divinity are aſcribed to him; as, † *Heb.* 9. 14. † *knowing all things*; ubiquity, or * *Preſence in all Places*; † *Eternity*, or duration * *Gen.* 1. 2. *Job* 26. 13. through all Times; * *Creating the World*, † *Iſa.* 42. 8. and 48. 11. being joyned with God, who *will not* † *impart his Glory to another*, as an Object of *Faith*

Faith and *Worſhip*, in * *Baptiſm*, and the † *Apoſtolical Benediction*, and the like.

* *Mat.* 28. 19.
† 2 *Cor.* 13, 14.

Queſt. But if both the *Father* and the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghoſt* be God, are there not three Gods?

Anſw. No; becauſe *theſe three are One*, that is, one in Nature, or * one Thing; 1 *Joh.* 5. 7. There is a Trinity of Perſons, but theſe three are myſteriouſly united in Nature, and dependance: which makes but one God-head, not three Gods.

* *Gr.* εν.

Queſt. But why is he call'd *Holy*, more than the Father, or the Son? Since Holineſs was reckon'd one of the Divine Attributes, are not all the three Perſons, who are equally God, equal alſo in Holineſs?

Anſw. Yes. But though they are equally Holy, in Nature, or Eſſence: yet is he particularly ſtyled ſo, in reſpect of his Operations. For as God the *Father* particularly undertook for the *Creation* of men; and God the *Son*, for the *Redemption* of them; ſo did God the *Holy Ghoſt*, for their *Sanctification*, being always ready to work holineſs in thoſe, who ſet themſelves to fear God, and to ſerve our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*. *We are ſaved, by the renewal of the Holy Ghoſt*, Tit. 3. 5, 6. And *purified through the Spirit*, 1 Pet. 1. 22.

Queſt. Why do we profeſs Faith, and truſt in him?

Anſw. Becauſe we are to receive all our Graces, and preparations for Eternal Glo-

ry from him. For after *Chriſt* had Redeemed us with his Blood, and aſcended into Heaven; the Reſt, which was to be done further for our Salvation here on Earth, was left to the care of the *Holy Spirit*, whom *Chriſt* ſent down as his ſubſtitute, to ſupply his abſence, and miniſter whatſoever he left wanting to his Body, which is the *Church*, to perfect it in *Faith* and *Holineſs*.

Queſt. By this I perceive, a great part of *Chriſtian Knowledge*, lyes in underſtanding what the *Holy Spirit* has done, and is ſtill to do for us. Pray what has he beſtowed, for the effecting of this great work?

Anſw. Gifts of two ſorts. 1. *Extraordinary*, beſtowed upon the *Apoſtles* and *Evangeliſts*, for the Planting and Eſtabliſhing *Chriſt's* Church and Religion. 2. *Ordinary*, that are given in common to all others, for every particular man's Salvation.

Queſt. What are his *extraordinary Gifts* beſtowed upon the Holy *Apoſtles*, for the Planting and Eſtabliſhing of *Chriſt's* Church and Religion?

Anſw. They conſiſt not only of *Gifts*, but likewiſe of *Offices*, which he is the Author of.

Queſt. What are the *Extraordinary Gifts* he gave them to this end?

Anſw. I ſhall reduce them to *three*. The Gift of *Inſpiration*, which revealed Chriſtianity to themſelves; of *Miracles*, which enabled

enabled them to prove it undeniable unto others; and of *Tongues*, whereby they could publiſh it over all the World, and be underſtood by men of every Language.

Queſt. When were theſe extraordinary Gifts beſtowed?

Anſw. Firſt, at the *Feaſt of Pentecoſt* upon the *Twelve*, when the *Spirit deſcended on each of them, in the ſhape of Cloven Tongues*, Act. 2. 3. And afterwards, generally upon others, at the impoſition of their hands, as abundantly appears, from St. *Luke's* account of the *Acts* of the *Holy Apoſtles*.

Queſt. And all theſe you ſay, were to enable them to Plant and Propagate their Religion?

Anſw. Yes; for by theſe Gifts, which are call'd *the Promiſe of the Father*, Act. 1. 4. (that is, that *Spirit*, which *Chriſt* had promiſed to *ſend them from the Father*, Joh. 15. 26.) the *Holy Ghoſt* was to act the Part of an *Advocate*, (as the † word *Paraclete* ſignifies, and is accordingly render'd, 1 Joh. 2. 1.) which was to plead his Cauſe to the unbelieving World. For *when* this *Comforter*, or *Advocate is come*, ſaith our Lord, *he will reprove*, or convince, *the world of* theſe three Things. *Of Sin, becauſe they believe not on me, i. e.* of the ſinfulneſs of infidelity. *Of Righteouſneſs, becauſe I go to the Father*; *i. e.* of my being a Righteous Perſon, and of Gods owning me for ſuch, though the *Jews* condemned me as a Malefactor. *And of Judgment, becauſe*

† παράκλητος.

cauſe the Prince of this World is judged. i. e. of the downfall of *Idolatry* and *Demon-worſhip*, becauſe the *Devil* is to be caſt out of the Heathen Temples by this Almighty Advocate, and all his Oracles ſilenced, *Joh.* 16. 8, 9, 10, 11.

Queſt. The *firſt* of theſe Gifts beſtowed upon the *Apoſtles*, you ſay was the Gift of *Inſpiration*, which revealed *Chriſt*'s Religion fully to themſelves. Did the *Apoſtles* receive their Religion from God, and were they inſpired by the Holy Ghoſt in what they Taught?

Anſw. Yes; *all Scripture is given by the inſpiration of God*, 2 Tim. 3. 16. Thus God inſpired *Moſes*, and the *Holy Prophets* of old: for *no Prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation, nor came by the will of man, i. e.* therein the *Prophets* did not ſpeak their own ſenſe, and reaſon: *but Holy men of God ſpake, as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt*, 2 Pet. 1. 20, 21. And after the ſame manner, *Chriſt* promiſes the *Apoſtles*, that the *Holy Ghoſt* ſhould teach them. *The Holy Ghoſt*, when he ſhall come, *ſhall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatſoever I have ſaid unto you*, Joh. 14. 26. And *when the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all Truth*, Joh. 16. 13.

Queſt. But had not *Chriſt* been their Teacher for ſeveral years together? and then what need was there for the *Holy Ghoſt* to come after him, for a further Inſtructer?

Anſw.

Anſw. Chriſt taught them by outward, and humane means, as one man doth another. And in this way, though he took care abundantly to propoſe Things to them, yet after all, they being Perſons of ſlow and ruſtick underſtandings, were very liable to forget, or miſconceive them: as 'tis plain they did the *Nature of his Kingdom*, the *Reaſons of his Death*, and his *Reſurrection*. But when the Holy Ghoſt came upon them, he inwardly enlightned their minds, and fill'd them with all variety of Heavenly Truth, bringing to their remembrance whatſoever *Chriſt* had ſaid, and ſupplying whatſoever he deſignedly †omitted, till they were better able to bear it. And though he did not teach them all things at once, they being ignorant for ſome time after his deſcent, of **the calling of the Gentiles*: yet in a moment he made a ſtrange progreſs with them, and ſo far illuminated their minds, that immediately upon his coming down, they underſtand, and apply *Scriptures*, and *expound Prophecies*, and ſet up for Teachers of other men, *Act.* 2.

† *John* 16. 12, 13.

* *Acts* 10. & *Ch.* 11.

Queſt. And what knowledge they had of their Religion, you ſay was of his inſpiring?

Anſw. Yes; after once he took the conduct of them. Their way of *knowing all things*, as St. *John* told the *Church* in their Age, was by *an unction from the Holy one*, 1 Joh. 2. 20, 27. And *the Goſpel which was Preached*

preached by me, ſaith St. *Paul*, *is not after Men*, i. e. of Mans deviſing. *For I neither received it of Man, neither was I taught it, but by the Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt*, Gal. 1. 11, 12. And of *all Holy Scripture*, it is declared, that it is *given by inſpiration of God*, 2 Tim. 3. 16.

Queſt. 'Tis plain, indeed, they ſay they are inſpired, and taught of God. But have we any more than theſe Teſtimonies of *Scripture*, that is their own word and ſaying for it?

Anſw. Yes, the Miracles they wrought in confirmation of it. *They preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with Signs following*, Mar. 16. 20.

Queſt. I perceive the Holy Ghoſt did reveal God's will to them, and in the Holy *Scriptures* they have revealed it unto us. But in thoſe *Scriptures*, have they done it fully?

Anſw. Yes; for in that *Epiſtle*, which St. *Paul* ſent laſt to *Timothy*, before which, the greateſt Part of his other *Epiſtles*, and of the *Goſpel-Canon* was writ, he Declares of *all the Scriptures* then extant, that they *are able to make us wiſe unto Salvation*, being *Profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for inſtruction in Righteouſneſs. That the Man of God may be Perfect, throughly furniſhed* out of them *unto all Good works*, 2 Tim. 3. 15, 16, 17. Nay ſome ſingle Books of Scripture, as the Particular Goſpels are

full

full enough to this end. And accordingly St. *Luke* teſtifies of his Goſpel, that it contains *thoſe Things which all Chriſtians moſt ſurely believed*, and *wherein Theophilus*, an *Excellent* Perſon, and no way Defective in ſaving Knowledge, had been Principled and *inſtructed* Luk. 1. 1, 3, 4. and *all that Jeſus began to do and teach, till he was taken up*, Act. 1. 1, 2. All neceſſary Chriſtianity was Faithfully preached by *Jeſus Chriſt*, and they Faithfully ſet out his Life, and Preaching. And what St. *Luke* added afterwards, in the *Acts of the Holy Apoſtles*, was only an Hiſtorical Account of the Method they took, what they ſuffered, and how they ſucceeded in Preaching this Doctrine. And as for the *Epiſtles* of the ſeveral *Apoſtles*, which were accidentally, and occaſionally writ, for the Emergent Benefit of the Churches, they either repeat and preſs the ſame Things, or Comment upon them in fuller Explications, or Determine ſome Controverſies ſtarted in the Church about them, or confute ſome unchriſtian Opinions and Heretical corruptions of Goſpel-Truths, as is obvious to any careful, and intelligent comparer of them.

Queſt. Having therefore theſe *Scriptures* Faithfully conveyed to us, by God's Bleſſing, we muſt not look for, or liſten to any *New Revelation*?

Anſw. No, not of the Way to pleaſe God, and go to Heaven. *Chriſt*, our Great *Prophet*,

† Dan. 9. 24. *Prophet*, who *was to* † *Seal up Vision and Prophesie*, having inspired his *Apostles*, and fully Revealed all these things to us once already by them, it is a vain thing to fancy he should do it over again.

Quest. The Gift of Inspiration then, or of having Religion immediately Revealed to them, was necessary only to *Apostles* and *Evangelists*, who were the first Publishers of it from God?

Answ. 'Tis very true. And accordingly, in Suiting the *Gifts*, and *Ministries*, reckned up 1 *Cor.* 12. to the *word of Wisdom*, or Gospel Revelation, which is the First, and Chiefest in the List of *Gifts*, *v.* 8. St. *Paul* adapts the Order of *Apostles*, as its Correspondent, and the first and chiefest in the Number of *Ministries*, ver. 28. Inspiration of Religion was only to fit and Qualifie them for that Office. Hence it is, probably, that † 1 *John* 2. 20. it is by St. *John* called † *their Unction*, that is, I suppose, their investiture in their Office: For, 'tis well known, the common way of investing Men in Offices, especially in the *Priesthood*, and *Prophetick* Office, was by *anointing*. And St. *Paul* infers his Authority in the *Apostolical Office*, from his inspiration, because *his Gospel was not after Man*, but he was sent out by God, and had it *immediately Revealed* to him by him, *Gal.* 1. 11, 12, 15, 16, 17. And the † *John* 14. 26. Promise, that the † *Holy Ghost should teach them all things*, *and* * *guide them into all* * *John* 16. 13. *Truth*, was not made to any Christian of succeeding

ſucceeding Times, but particularly to the Holy *Apoſtles*, with whom it is our Bleſſed Lord there Diſcourſes. And *the Unction among them, whereby they knew all things*, that St. * *John* ſpeaks of, was whilſt he himſelf was alive, and other *Evangeliſts*; not to add, moreover, that his Epiſtle ſeems writ among the lateſt of the *Books of the New Teſtament*. So that then, probably, they had among them the inſpirations of almoſt all the other *Apoſtles*.

* *John* 2. 20. 17.

Queſt. So that inſpiration of Religion was deſign'd only for the *Infancy of the Church*, whilſt it was a Planting, and Religion a Publiſhing, but was to ceaſe when that was done?

Anſw. Yes; it was ſo. *Knowledge*, *i. e.* inſpired Knowledge, *Propheſie*, and *Tongues*, were fitted, as St. *Paul* notes, only for the *Child-hood of the Church*, for that is the Similitude he uſes, in expreſſing the tranſitorineſs of theſe Gifts, 1 *Cor.* 13. 9. *whilſt I was a Child, I ſpake as a Child, I underſtood as a Child*, &c. But theſe Helps of the Infant State, were to vaniſh, as it took Root, and grew up to Manhood. *When I became a Man, I put away Childiſh Things*, v. 11. *We know*, ſays he again, *in part, and we propheſie in part*: *i. e.* at preſent this inſpiration is imperfect, this Epiſtle being one of the earlieſt Writ, and the *Scripture-Canon* at that Time not being finiſhed, and generally come abroad. *But when that which is perfect is come*, i. e. as I conceive,

conceive, not only the Perfection of the other World, but a more Perfect State of the preſent Church, when the *Canon* ſhall be conſummated, and commonly given out, *then that which is in part, ſhall be* ſuperſeded and *Done away*, v. 9, 10. As for *Charity*, that bright Gem among ſaving Graces, it indeed *never fails. But whether there be Propheſies, they ſhall fail; whether there be Tongues they ſhall ceaſe; whether there be Knowledge, i. e.* inſpired Knowledge, *it ſhall vaniſh away*, v. 8.

Queſt. In Chriſtianity then, I ſee we muſt take up with the Holy *Scriptures*, and not look for new Revelations, except we would look alſo for a new Religion, and new *Apoſtles?*

Anſw. Very right.

Queſt. This is enough againſt any man, who pretends to *new Lights* and *Revelations* in Religion. But ſince there are many ſuch in the World, can you give me any further Direction how to try them?

Anſw. Yes; examine them *Firſt* by the *Scriptures*, bringing thoſe *New* Revelations to the *Old*, and then be ſure, they are either inventions of Men, or Deluſions of *Satan*, if they contradict it. *Tho we, or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Goſpel unto you, than that which we have* already *preached unto you*, and which is ſet forth in Scripture, *let him be accurſed. As we ſaid before, ſo ſay I now again, if any*, pretending never ſo much *Revelation*, *preach any other*

other Goſpel unto you, than that you have received, let him be accurſed, Gal. 1. 8, 9.

Queſt. What other way would you direct me to, for the Tryal of ſuch Pretenders?

Anſw. Secondly, call for their ſigns, or *Miracles*, as God's Token, to manifeſt that he ſpeaks by them. For when God ſends Men on new Meſſages, and Revelations, to teſtifie they come from him, and gain them credit, he empowers them to work Miracles, or give Signs, becauſe elſe they would go upon vain Errands. Thus, when God ſent *Moſes* to the *Iſraelites*, and he objected, that *they would disbelieve him, and ſay, God had not appeared unto him*, Exod. 4. 1. God owns the reaſonableneſs of the Objection, and impowers him to *turn his Rod into a Serpent*, and work other Signs from him, to gain Credit with them. Which he did, as he himſelf told *Moſes*, *that they may believe, that the Lord God of their Fathers hath appeared unto thee. And it ſhall come to paſs, if they will not believe thee after the firſt ſign, that they will believe thee after the latter ſign.* Or, if *they disbelieve after that too*, thou ſhalt *work another Sign*, ver. 5. to ver. 10.

Queſt. Have you any further Evidence of this?

Anſw. Yes; in *Chriſt* himſelf. For without Miracles, he did not require all Men to believe him, when he came in God's name; and then ſure, without them, they

are not bound to believe any other pretender to new Revelation. *If I had not done among them the Works which no other Man did, they had not had ſin* in disbelieving, *John* 15. 24.

Queſt. And this was ſtill the way of *Prophets*, when God ſent them?

Anſw. Yes; when he ſent them to reveal any *New Thing*. Indeed, when *Prophets* came only to preſs old Revelations, that ſtood confirmed by former Miracles, they needed not always to come with a New Sign. And this was the caſe of many *Ordinary Prophets* among the *Jews*, whom God ſpecially ſent and ſtirred up, to inforce ſome neglected Precepts, and chiefly the *Moral* and *Spiritual* Parts of the Law of *Moſes*. But when any pretended to any extraordinary Commiſſion, for reverſing of ſome Old, or ſetting up ſome New Rule, or Doctrine, as it was reſonable to expect they ſhould, they were always empowred to give a Sign, or work a Miracle, in Confirmation. And this is the Teſt God himſelf gives, whereby to know when he had ſent any one. *If thou ſay in thine Heart, how ſhall we know the Word, which the Lord hath not ſpoken? When a Prophet ſpeaketh in the Name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to paſs, that is the thing which the Lord hath not ſpoken, but the Prophet hath ſpoken preſumptuouſly, thou ſhalt not be afraid of him*, Deut. 18. 21, 22.

Queſt. So that no Prophet, pretending

to

to New Revelation, was to be believed barely on his own word, till ſome ſign from God gave witneſs to it?

Anſw. No; the great Prophet of the Church, *Jeſus Chriſt* himſelf, did not expect it. *If I bear Witneſs of my ſelf, my Witneſs is not true, i. e.* ought not to paſs for true. *But there is another that beareth Witneſs of me, for the Works which the Father hath given me to finiſh, the ſame Works that I do, bear witneſs of me, that the Father hath ſent me,* John 5. 31, 32, 36. And this is neceſſary, to prevent our being deceived. For *many falſe Prophets are gone out into the World,* 1 John 4. 1. And theſe come all in God's Name, though what they declare, is not his Revelation, but their own invention, or ſome *Satanical* Deluſion. And if we were to believe a Man inſpired, barely upon his own Word, ſince they all ſay they are, we ſhould believe all of them. So that to prevent being deceived, we muſt not take a Mans own Word for his being ſent thus of God, till he ſhews ſome Sign from him to atteſt it.

Queſt. You ſay they are miraculouſly aſſiſted, when they are ſent to reveal any New thing. Is there not a like neceſſity of Signs and Miracles then, when they only come to Remove Corruptions, and revive ſuch former acknowledged Revelations, as had Miracles to confirm them?

Anſw. No; to Perſons that own he ſpake it, God's *Word* has as much Authority as

his *Work*. Whilſt they have his clear Word to ſhew for themſelves, they are ſufficiently qualified to uſe his Name, to reprove and convince, on the ſcore and credit of *ordinary Miniſters*, without producing any *new* and *extraordinary Credentials*. Beſides, for theſe things, they may appeal to all the old Miracles wrought to teſtifie theſe Revelations. And accordingly, a great part of the *old Prophets*, under the *Jeweſh* State, coming to reduce men to the obedience of *Moſes*, to reprove ſins, and to reform abuſes, wrought no Miracles, it being enough for them to produce the Holy *Scriptures*, who only ſought to bring thoſe back to them, who had ſwerved from them. And this alſo was the Caſe of our *firſt Reformers*. They ſtudied no new ways, but only endeavour'd to reſtore Religion, which was much depraved in theſe Parts of the world, to that Form, which was at firſt moſt miraculouſly confirmed by *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles*. And therefore their Proofs were not to be fetched from ſigns and wonders, as Men that introduced new, and unatteſted Tenets, but from the *Holy Scriptures*.

Queſt. But are we not told of *Falſe Prophets ſhewing Signs*, Mat. 24. 24? And what ſhall we ſay to them, if they alledge Miracles for falſe Things?

Rev. 13. 13, 14. & 16. 14.

Anſw. If they teach things contrary to the Scriptures, they muſt not only work Miracles for their contrary Opinions, but more, and greater than were wrought by

Chriſt

Chriſt and his *Apoſtles* to confirm the *Scriptures*. For here, all the Miracles wrought for the Scripture, are againſt them; ſince their pretended Miracles, are brought for a contrary Thing. And when our Faith is ſollicited by a competition of Miracles, as the Faith of the *Jews* was, between the Miracles of *Moſes* and thoſe of the *Magicians*, Exod. 7. 11, 22. and when any *Seducer gave ſigns*, to draw them to *Idolatry*, Deut. 13. 1, 2. we muſt believe that ſide which has the greateſt, and the moſt of them. And this will ſecure us againſt all the Errors and feign'd Miracles of new Lights and Pretenders. For 'tis certain, they will never ſhew the tenth part of thoſe Miracles, to confute any Doctrine contain'd in Scripture, that *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles* have done, to confirm it.

Queſt. I confeſs, 'tis very clear from what you ſay, that the *Scripture* is the only Revelation we muſt ſtick to; and that in *matters of Religion*, we muſt not hearken to any other Pretenders to new Light and inſpiration. But doth not the Prophet *Joel* ſay, Revelations ſhould be common things among Chriſtians? *I will pour out my Spirit in thoſe days upon all Fleſh, and your Sons and Daughters ſhall Propheſie; your young men ſhall ſee Viſions, and your old men ſhall dream Dreams*, Joel 2. 28, 29.

Anſw. Yes; but by *thoſe days*, he means not all the days of Chriſtianity, but only the *days of the Apoſtles*, when ſuch Revela-

tions were common Things. For in thoſe ſame days, as it follows in *Joel*, *I will ſhew Wonders in Heaven, and in Earth*, ſaith God, *Blood, and Fire, and Pillars of Smoak. And the Sun ſhall be turned into darkneſs, and the Moon into Blood, before the Great and Terrible day of the Lord come*, *i. e.* before the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, whereof our Saviour interprets this paſſage, *Mat.* 24. 29. which deſtruction fell out in the *Apoſtolical* Age, before the death of St. *John*, *Joel* 2. 30, 31. And St. *Peter* ſays, theſe inſpirations foretold by *Joel*, were fulfilled, when the *Holy Ghoſt at Pentecoſt deſcended upon them. This is that which was ſpoken of by the Prophet* Joel, *it ſhall come to paſs in the laſt days, I will pour out my Spirit upon all Fleſh, and your Sons and your Daughters ſhall Propheſie*, &c. Act. 2. 16, 17, 18. So that *Joel*'s Prophecy of inſpirations doth not remain now to be fulfilled, but, as *Joel* himſelf foretold, and as St. *Peter* declared, was long ſince accompliſhed.

Queſt. But God gave theſe Revelations in the *Apoſtles* Age, and is not he the ſame God ſtill in ours?

Anſw. Yes; he is always the ſame God, but he doth not always do the ſame things. He came down before the *Jews*, in *Thunder* and *Fire upon Mount Sinai* † once, but he did not do ſo in after-times. He ſhed abroad the Gift of *Tongues*, and *Miracles*, upon the generality of Chriſtians in the *Apoſtles* days, but he has not done ſo in any

† *Exod.* 19. 16, 18.

any others ſince. He is the ſame God, and has the ſame care and kindneſs for his Church, in all Times: but he doth not always work the ſame effects, but only according to our occaſions and neceſſities. And immediate *Revelation* was neceſſary to the *Apoſtles* in their circumſtances, and as unneceſſary to us in ours.

Queſt. Were theſe inſpirations meerly about Doctrinal Things, and declaring the will of God, only in points of Faith, or manners?

Anſw. No; but ſometimes, in thoſe days of Revelation, they were inſpired alſo in their Devotions, with Prayers and Hymns, which was a bleſſing they were more ſenſible of in that Age, becauſe as yet they had no formed and eſtabliſhed Liturgies. Thus St. *Paul* tells the *Corinthians*, *every one in their Aſſemblies had* an inſpired *Pſalm*, as well as an inſpired *Doctrine*, Praying and Praiſing, as well as Preaching by Revelation, 1. *Cor.* 14. 26. And when they ſpoke by the *Gift of Tongues*, it was oft in *inſpired Hymns* and *Devotions: for he that ſpeaketh in an unknown Tongue*, ſaith he, *ſpeaketh unto God*, v. 2. he *Prays* to God, or *Praiſes* him in that ſtrange Gift of the *Spirit*, v. 14, 15, 16. And in the *Enthuſiaſms of Tongues*, which *fell on Cornelius* and his *Gentile Friends*, *they magnified God*, Act. 10. 40.

Queſt. Beſides theſe Revelations about *Religion*, and the way to Happineſs, had they not alſo *Propheſie*, or Revelation about *other* Things?

Anſw. Yes; they had Revelations of future events, concerning either themſelves, their Friends, or the whole Church. Thus *Agabus* foretold the *Famine*, Acts 11. 28. and St. *Paul's impriſonment at Jeruſalem*, Act. 21. 10, 11. And *Paul* foretold to his *Company in the Ship*, that they ſhould *all be ſaved*, and none of them periſh in the Ship-wrack, *Act.* 27. 22, 23, 24, &c. And St. *John* foretold, not only what was to befall particular Perſons, but the whole Church in ſucceeding Ages, in his Book of the *Revelations*.

Queſt. I remember you ſaid, we are not now to expect any more Revelations in *Religion*, to ſhew us the way to pleaſe God, and go to Heaven. But do you ſuppoſe, that ſome may ſtill be *Prophets*, and have Revelations about other things?

Anſw. Perhaps they may, about *Particular accidents* to particular Perſons, or Families; or about *great Revolutions*, to States, or Empires. As to theſe Matters, it is not for me to ſtint the kindneſs and care of God, or to determine what intimations he may ſometimes vouchſafe from the other World. And if any wiſe, ſober, and good men, by the forcibleneſs of the impreſſion on their minds, after the *Prophetick* way, which convinces and ſatisfies themſelves, and by the correſpondence of events, which may ſatisfie others, find they have any ſuch thing, I ſhall not withſtand them; and ſo long as they do not offer

theſe,

theſe, to innovate in Religion, the Revelations of the *Scripture* are no bar againſt them.

Queſt. You have fully explained this firſt miraculous Gift of the *Holy Ghoſt*, the Gift of *inſpirations*. Were there any other miraculous Gifts *ſubſervient* to it, which you would explain to me under this Head?

Anſw. Yes; *Firſt* the Gift of *diſcerning Spirits*, *i. e.* among all the Pretenders to inſpiration, who ſpoke true inſpirations, and who meer pretences of it, or Satanical deluſions. *We have received the Spirit of God*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *which reveals to us the Things of God.* And *he that is Spiritual, judgeth all Things*, that are pretended by others; *yet he himſelf is judged of no man*, *i. e.* they who want his Spirit, cannot judge of him. *For who*, *i.e.* of thoſe who want this Spirit, *hath known the mind of the Lord*, to diſcern when another meerly pretends to it? 1 *Cor.* 10. 12, 15, 16. And this Gift of Diſcerning Spirits, was very neceſſary in that Age, to warn the Church againſt Falſe Prophets. For when there was ſuch a commonneſs of true Revelations, it gave the greateſt opportunity to Diabolical Enthuſiaſts, or wicked Impoſtors, to obtrude their inventions, or deluſions upon the Church, hoping they ſhould paſs for inſpirations among the crowd of others. *Now are there many Falſe Phrophets gone out into the World*, ſaith St. *John*, which makes it neceſſary *not to believe every Spirit*, 1 Joh. 4. 1.

Queſt.

Queſt. This Gift indeed, was neceſſary to diſcover them, before the *Scriptures* were written: but when once they had them, could not any Chriſtians thereby detect Impoſtors, without the Gift of diſcerning Spirits?

Anſw. Yes; and ſo St. *John*, and the other *Apoſtles* in their *Epiſtles*, gave ordinary Rules for this purpoſe. One of theſe Rules was, confeſſing *Chriſt* to be come in the Fleſh. *Try the Spirits*, ſays he, *whether they be of God: and hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every Spirit that confeſſeth Jeſus Chriſt is come in the Fleſh, is of God; and every one that denys it, is not of God*, 1 Joh. 4. 1, 2, 3. and 2 Joh. 7. Another Rule was, their ſubmiſſion to the *Apoſtles*, and Governours of the Church, ſince God would inſpire no man to break Unity, and make needleſs Schiſms. *We are of God. He that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us: hereby know we the Spirit of Truth, and the Spirit of Errour*, 1 Joh. 4. 6. But the moſt comprehenſive Rule of all, was their agreement, or diſſonancy with the Holy *Scriptures*, as I noted before, and the Revelations of the undoubted *Apoſtles*. *If any man think himſelf to be a Prophet, or Spiritual, let him acknowledge that the Things which I write unto you, are the Commandments of the Lord*, 1 Cor. 14.37. But *if any Man, or Angel from Heaven, preach unto you any other Goſpel, than that you have received already, let him be accurſed*, Gal. 1.8,9.

* *Queſt.*

Queſt. What other miraculous Gifts, beſides this of *Diſcerning Spirits*, were ſubſervient to this Gift of inſpirations?

Anſw. Secondly, the Gift of *utterance*, *i. e.* of aſſurance, fluency, and volubility of ſpeech, whereby they were enabled to declare, and make known their Revelations to advantage. This St. *Paul* deſired the *Coloſſians*, to beg of God for him; *Praying for us, that God would open to us a Door of utterance, to ſpeak the myſtery of Chriſt, that I may make it manifeſt, as I ought to ſpeak*, Col. 4. 3, 4. Under which is comprehended that miraculous *boldneſs*, which theſe poor men ſhew'd to admiration, in aſſerting undauntedly a moſt exploded Cauſe, in the face of their numerous and potent Adverſaries. *That utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the myſtery of the Goſpel: that therein I may ſpeak boldly, as I ought to ſpeak*, Eph. 6. 19, 20.

Queſt. Was this miraculous *Boldneſs*, a Gift beſtowed upon the *Old Prophets*?

Anſw. Yes; it was a part of that *Spirit of Fortitude* the *Jewiſh* Writers ſpeak of, wherewith God armed a Prophet, before he ſent him with a difficult and perillous Meſſage, in which he might foreſee the greateſt terrour, and dread of men, to ſtop his Mouth. Thus God told *Ezekiel*, when he ſent him to the impudent, and hard-hearted *Iſraelites*. *Behold, I have made thy face ſtrong againſt their faces, and thy*

thy forehead ſtrong againſt their foreheads. As an Adamant, harder than Flint, have I made thy Fore-head: Fear them not, neither be diſmayed at their Looks, though they be a Rebellious Houſe, Ezek. 3. 8, 9. Thus alſo he bid *Jeremiah*, *ſpeak, and not be diſmayed at their Faces; for he had that Day made him a defenced City, an Iron Pillar, and Brazen Walls, againſt the whole Land, againſt the Kings of Judah, the Princes, the Prieſts, and the People thereof*, Jer. 1. 8, 17, 18, 19.

Queſt. And did the *Holy Ghoſt*, give this miraculous *Boldneſs* to the *Apoſtles*?

Anſw. Yes; in a wonderful meaſure. *They were all filled with the Holy Ghoſt, and ſpake the word of God with Boldneſs*, Act. 4. 31. And *when* the *Jewiſh Rulers ſaw the Boldneſs of Peter and John*, aſſerting freely *the Power and Authority of Jeſus*, and taxing them openly as his wicked *Murderers*, to their very Faces, *they marvelled*, ver. 10, 11, 12, 13.

Queſt. Had they this boldneſs of Spirit at all times?

Anſw. No. For at *Corinth* St. *Paul* ſays of himſelf, that *he was with them in Weakneſs and Fear, and much Trembling*, 1 Cor. 2. 3. In ſome great Dangers, and preſſing Neceſſities, their Natural Fears would return upon them, to trouble them for ſome time. Thus it ſometimes happen'd to St. *Paul*, where he expected the moſt perillous oppoſition: for, after the hardſhips, and hazards he had run through at † *Philippi*, and

† *Act.* 16. 12, 22, 23 24.

and at † *Theſſalonica*, expecting the like at *Corinth* too, *he was with them*, as he ſays, *in much trembling*, and ſo diſcouraged, that he needed a *Revelation* to *embolden* him, *Act.* 18. 1, 9, 10. And thus it did eſpecially, if at ſuch time he were alone, and had not his Companions with him. *When he came into Macedonia*, whilſt he was by himſelf, *his Fleſh had no Reſt, but he was troubled on every ſide, without were fightings, and within were fears.* But as ſoon as his Coadjutor *Titus* came to him, he took heart, and *God, who comforteth thoſe who are caſt down, comforted him by the coming of Titus*, 2 Cor. 7. 5, 6. *And when he came to Troas, where a Door was opened to him, he had no Reſt in his Spirit, becauſe he found not Titus his Brother*, as he expected, to ſtand by him, 2 Cor. 2. 12, 13. And at *Corinth*, whilſt he was alone, he was the more afraid; but *when Silas and Timotheus were come, he was preſſed in Spirit*, i. e. vigorouſly put forward, and emboldened by their Preſence, *Act.* 18. 5. † *Act.* 17. 5, 6, 10.

Queſt. By this I ſee the *Apoſtles* were Men, and had ſome Returns of Humane Fears, and Infirmities, and this miraculous boldneſs did not actuate and invigorate them at all times?

Anſw. 'Tis true indeed. But ordinarily they injoy'd it, and particularly at thoſe very inſtants, when they had the greateſt need of it. As St. *Paul did before Nero*, where *the Lord ſtood with him, and ſtrengthned*

ned him, i. e. with a mind undaunted, 2 *Tim.* 4. 16, 17. And as *Peter* and *John* did before the *Sanhedrim*, where they were ſo *bold*, that the *Rulers marvelled*, Act. 4. 6, 7, 8, 10, 13. And as *Chriſt* promiſed they ſhould all do, when they were *brought before Governours, and Kings, for his ſake*. For then, ſays he, *take no thought beforehand, how, or what ye ſhall ſpeak; for it ſhall be given you in that ſame Hour, what you ſhall ſpeak*, i. e. both matter, and Preſence of Mind to utter it, *For it is not ye that ſpeak, but the Spirit of your Father that ſpeaketh in you*, Mat. 10. 18, 19, 20.

Queſt. What is the *ſecond* of thoſe *Extraordinary Gifts*, which the *Holy Ghoſt* beſtowed upon the *Apoſtles*, for the Planting and eſtabliſhing of *Chriſt's* Church and Religion?

Anſw. The Gift of *Miracles*, which enabled them to prove thoſe things undeniably unto others, which God had revealed to themſelves.

Queſt. Is working a Miracle for any Doctrine, a Proof it comes from God?

Anſw. Yes, if the Doctrine tends to Holineſs, and be worthy of God. For a Miracle, is not the work of Man, but of God's and ſhews that God ſtands on his ſide that works it. So that Miracles are God's Witneſs, and way of proving Things. *The Works that I do in my Father's Name, bear witneſs of me*, Joh. 10. 24, 25. *If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.*

But

But If I do, though you believe not me, believe the Works, ver. 37, 38. And *God bore the Apoſtles witneſs, with ſigns and wonders, and divers Miracles, and Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt*, Heb. 2. 4. and *confirmed the Word with ſigns following*, Mar. 16. 20. The Power of Miracles, is the *Spirits Proof*, or *Demonſtration. My Speech was in Demonſtration of the Spirit, and of Power*, 1 Cor. 2. 4.

Queſt. But doth not *Satan* himſelf ſometimes work a Miracle, or ſuch a lying Wonder, as will paſs for a Miracle?

Anſw. Yes, for Doctrines that ſerve his own ends; but never for a Doctrine that plainly oppoſes and overthrows them. For ſo *Satan*, as *Chriſt* argues undeniably, *would be divided againſt Satan, and then how could his Kingdom ſtand?* Mat. 12. 25, 26. If a Doctrine therefore tends to Holineſs, as I ſaid, and is worthy of God, as Chriſtianity doth moſt eminently, a Miracle is a ſure proof of it, and 'tis certain the evil Spirits have no hand in working it. Not to mention thoſe other moſt demonſtrative marks of the Miracles wrought for *Chriſtianity*, whereof I have already diſcourſed in † another Place. † *Part.* 1. *c.* 3.

Queſt. In any Miracles then which are propoſed to us, we are to look not only at the works, but alſo at their end, and uſefulneſs?

Anſw. Yes. For if they are for impious, and impure Ends, 'tis plain they come from impious, and unclean Spirits; if only

only for Oſtentation and Praiſe, from vain-glorious and proud ones; if meerly to gratifie idle Curioſity of Spectators, like Feats of Juglers, from Ludicrous and Vain Spirits, who delight to amuſe with Toys and Trifles. All Miracles, being the effect of intelligent Agents, by their Deſign ſhew the Temper and Genius of the Actors. And therefore, when any are pretended to come from God, that muſt be ſhewn in their gravity, grandure, pious heavenly fruits, or important uſefulneſs. But we muſt not put his Hand to any that ſerve only to vicious ends, or ridiculous impertinence.

Queſt. And as God works them only for important and needful ends, Doth he not alſo only on needful occaſions?

Anſw. Very right; either of ſuccouring his Servants, or Crediting his Meſſengers, eſpecially when he ſends them out at firſt to promulge a Law, or ſometimes, though in this more ſeldom, when he ſends them to revive it after ſome great and general Defection from it; and accordingly, the moſt Miracles that were wrought all the time of the *Jewiſh State*, were either by *Moſes*, who firſt publiſhed the Law, or by *Elias* and *Eliſha* to reſtore it, after *Jeroboam*'s *Calves* had made *ten Tribes* of *twelve*, moſt groſly to ſwerve from it. And therefore it is a vain thing, for any of thoſe to liſten after new Miracles, who pretend to Rule their Faith by the Holy *Scriptures*, which

which ſtand atteſted by all the old ones, as if there were ſome Defects in the Miracles of *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles*, which need to be ſupplied by their Followers. But 'tis more eſpecially vain to pretend, as the Church of *Rome* doth, to work ſuch Miracles only among themſelves, who believe without them, but never before us, who have more need to be convinced by them. *Moſes*, and our *Saviour Chriſt*, and his *bleſſed Apoſtles*, ſhewed their Miracles among thoſe they deſign'd to make *Converts*, or ſuch young and unſetled Followers, as needed to be confirmed and eſtabliſhed in the Faith. And in Teſtimony to *the Man of God*, Jeroboam's hand is miraculouſly *withered*, and as miraculouſly *reſtored before the Altar at Bethel*, the very Seat of the Schiſmaticks, 1 *King.* 13. 4, 5, 6. And if *Tongues* are uſed *for a ſign*, 'tis not to thoſe, ſaith St. *Paul*, *who believe*, *but to thoſe who believe not*, 1 Cor. 14. 22. To ſhew ſigns where they are not needed, and withhold them where they are more needful, is not the way and method of his Almighty Power, who is neither wanting in neceſſaries, nor Liberal in ſuperfluities.

Queſt. Was this Gift of Miracles beſtowed upon the *Apoſtles*?

Anſw. Yes; *God bore them witneſs*, *with Signs*, *and Wonders*, *and divers Miracles*, Heb. 2. 4. and *confirmed the word with Signs following*, Mar. 16. 20.

Queſt. What Miracles had they the Gift of?

Anſw. They had *the Gift of Healing*, without the help of Medicine. *To one is given, by the Spirit, the Gift of healing*, 1 Cor. 12. 9. And thus by the *Holy Ghoſt*, *Peter* and *John healed the Lame Man*, Act. 3. 2, 6. In working theſe Cures, when our Saviour ſent them out at *Firſt*, they uſed the Ceremony of *anointing with Oyl*. *They anointed with Oyl many that were ſick, and healed them*, Mar. 6. 13. And this Ceremony of *anointing*, was held on afterwards, whilſt this miraculous *Gift of Healing* laſted, and *Prayer* was added to it. *Is any Sick among you*, ſays St. *James*, *let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let them Pray over him, anointing him with Oyl in the Name of the Lord*, for in *Chriſt's* Name all their Miracles were wrought: *And the Prayer of Faith*, i. e. put up in Faith of the miraculous cure, *ſhall ſave the ſick*, viz. from his Diſeaſe, *and the Lord ſhall raiſe him up*; *and if he have committed Sins*, i. e. if any Sins brought this ſickneſs, *they ſhall be forgiven him* in the cure of it, *Jam.* 5. 14, 15.

Queſt. By *ſaving of the Sick* here, indeed, may ſeem to be meant ſaving of him from his Diſeaſe; becauſe it follows; *and the Lord ſhall raiſe him up*. But *the Prayer of Faith*, and *forgiveneſs of Sins*, ſeem to note ſomething elſe?

Anſw. As for *the Prayer of Faith*, that Agrees very well: for a Faith, or belief that

that God will enable him to do it, is neceſſary in every one that works a Miracle. And as for the *Forgiving of his Sins*; you muſt know, that the Puniſhment of Sin, is not only eternal Death, but Preſent Diſeaſes: and therefore that the ſin is forgiven, at leaſt in part, when either of theſe is taken off. And thus the *Scripture* ſpeaks of it. For when any ſickneſs, or infirmities, come for ſin, our Saviour makes it the ſame thing to ſay, *thy ſins are forgiven*, as to ſay, *ariſe and walk:* and accordingly, when he deſign'd to work a Cure, he would ſay, *thy ſins are pardoned*, Mat. 9. 2, 5.

Queſt. What other Miracles, had they the gift of?

Anſw. Of *caſting out Devils*, as the *Apoſtles* did *out of Multitudes*, Act. 5. 16. Of *Raiſing the Dead*, as *Peter* raiſed *Dorcas*, Act. 9. 39, 40. and *Paul*, *Eutichus*, Act. 20. 9, 10, 12. *Of inflicting Bodily Diſeaſes, and Torments*, as well as *Spiritual Horrors*, and *Supernatural Agonies, on contumacious ſinners*, as *Paul* did on *Elymas the Sorcerer, ſtriking him with blindneſs*, Act. 13. 8, 9, 11. and on the *inceſtuous Corinthian*, whom he thus puniſhed *for the deſtruction of the Fleſh*, 1 Cor. 5. 5. Which Corporal inflictions, he ſeems plainly to threaten the Back-ſliders at *Corinth* withal, when he tells them of *coming to them with a Rod*, 1 Cor. 4. 21. Of *uſing ſharpneſs*, 2 Cor. 13. 10. Of *Revenging all Diſobedience*, 2 Cor. 10. 6. Yea, of ſuch ſharpneſs, as would over-awe, and

humble the moſt carnal minds, and contemptuous Oppoſers of Church Authority and Cenſures: *bringing down the Fleſh*, as he ſaid of the *Inceſtuous Perſons*, and making them *afraid to Blaſpheme*, as he ſaid of Hymeneus *and* Alexander, *who were moſt contemptuous and ſtubborn in their Heretical Opinion*, 1 Tim. 19. 20. And this infliction of ſmart, and Bodily Diſeaſes, upon obſtinate Sinners, is called *Delivering over unto Satan*, as the *Apoſtle* ſays he had done in theſe laſt mentioned Caſes.

Queſt. Why was this infliction of Bodily ſmart and puniſhment upon them, called *Delivering over to Satan?*

Anſw. Becauſe theſe Pains were to be the Effect of God's immediate Juſtice, and *Satan* ſhould be the Tormentor, and Executioner of God's Vengeance: And therefore, when theſe Offenders were given up to God's Juſtice, they were ſaid to be delivered into his Hands. When God in a more immediate, and extraordinary way, ſends preſent heavy Plagues upon Men, eſpecially as a Puniſhment for ſin, *Satan* is often ſaid to inflict them. *Saul's Melancholly*, is called *an Evil Spirit from the Lord* upon him, 1 *Sam.* 18. 10. God's *Plagueing the Egyptians*, *ſending evil Angels among them*, Pſ. 78. 49. *The Woman*, who had *been bowed together eighteen years*, *one whom Satan had bound*, Luk. 13. 11, 16. The *Lunatick*, a *Demoniack*, or *one vexed with an unclean Spirit*, Mat. 17. 15, 18. and Luk. 9. 39, 42.

And

And thus, when the *Apoſtles* gave up offenders to God to puniſh them, becauſe the Devil executes the Puniſhment which God decrees, it is called *Delivering them over unto Satan.*

Queſt. This delivering to *Satan* then was an Act of Divine Juſtice upon theſe Criminals; and God commanded *Satan* thus to afflict them, as formerly he afflicted *Job*, at the inſtance of the *Apoſtles*?

Anſw. Yes; and therefore, as 'tis not improbable, it was done with *Prayer* to God to take vengeance. For ſo the *Apoſtle* may ſeem to expreſs himſelf, on his Delivering up *Alexander*. *Alexander the Copper-Smith did me much Evil, the Lord reward him according to his Works*, 2 Tim. 4. 14. In this he Acted as a Spiritual Judge, delivering up to Juſtice, and Prayed God to exact the Penalty according to his Sentence.

Queſt. Had they the Gift of any other Miracles?

Anſw. Yes; for ſuch I reckon was their *Joy in Tribulations*, and Glorying even in the very Hour of their ſufferings. When the *Council had beaten them, they departed from their Preſence, rejoycing that they were counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame for Chriſt's Name*, Acts 5. 40, 41. Whilſt their Stripes were yet ſore, and they were pinched *in the Stocks*, in the Dark Dungeon, *Paul and Silas ſang Praiſes to God*, and triumphed

rejoycing, *Act.* 16. 23, 24, 25. And upon *their Perſecution at Antioch, the Diſciples were filled with Joy, and with the Holy Ghoſt*, Act. 13. 50, 52. Thus, as if they were not of the ſame Mold, nor had Bodies like other Men, did they Glory in their Shame for *Chriſt*, and rejoice in Tribulation.

Queſt. But is not *Joy* an *ordinary* Fruit of the *Spirit*? And why then do you think this rejoicing of theirs, had ſomething Miraculous in it?

Anſw. A ſecret Joy in the ſenſe of God's Love, is common among Good Men, and an ordinary *Fruit of the Spirit*, and ſo 'tis reckon'd, *Gal.* 5. 22. Yea, and Joy in Tribulation, after the Tribulation is paſt; for *afterwards it yields the Peaceable Fruits of Righteouſneſs, to thoſe that are exerciſed with it*, Heb. 12. 11. But to rejoice in the very midſt of it, and under the Stroke, as they did, I think has an extraordinary Gift, and miraculous Aid in it: For under the ordinary Aſſiſtance of the Spirit, the Bodily Pain hinders rejoycing at the very inſtant. *For the Preſent, no chaſtening ſeemeth to be joyous, but grievous*, Heb. 12. 11.

Queſt. What ſay you then to the Words of *Chriſt*, *Rejoice and be exceeding glad, when you are Perſecuted for my ſake*, Mat. 5. 11, 12.

Anſw. I think they do not ſo much expreſs a Duty, that he ſtrictly exacts, as a Gift and Priviledge, which he ſometimes beſtows upon his *Martyrs* and Confeſſors:

feſſors: As was viſible in the *Apoſtles* days, and among the *Primitive Martyrs.* For their minds were ſometimes ſo raviſhed, and tranſported, with Spiritual Conſolations, as to ſeize all the Powers of their Souls, and not ſuffer them to attend to the moſt Exquiſite Bodily Tortures. So as they could ſmile upon Racks, and ſing under their Executioners, and be ſo far intranced in Spiritual Comforts, as to declare under the moſt Bloody Butcheries, that they were not ſenſible of any Pain. And the ſame ſtupendious ſupports, God has ſometimes vouchſafed in later, and modern Perſecutions.

Queſt. I ſee the *Holy Ghoſt* endowed the *Apoſtles*, with ſtrange Gifts of Miracles. But could they work theſe Miracles, at any inſtant of time when they would; or were ſome Preparations required to them?

Anſw. There was required to them, 1. Always *Faith in him that wrought* them. And 2. ſometimes, particularly in miraculous Cures, *Faith in the Perſon that received* them, or whom they were wrought upon.

Queſt. What was the *Faith* required in him that wrought them?

Anſw. A Perſwaſion that God's Power would aſſiſt him, and perform the Miracle by him. For that they might never offer at this in vain, which would have expoſed both themſelves, and their Religion, whenſoever God would enable them

to work a Miracle, he firſt poſſeſſed their minds with a firm Belief and Aſſurance of it. And this is the *Faith*, ſo oft required of *Wonder-workers* in the *Scriptures*. *Though I have all Faith, ſo that I could remove Mountains*, 1 Cor. 13. 2. And, *if ye have Faith as a Grane of Muſtard-Seed, ye ſhall ſay to this Mountain, Remove hence to yonder Place, and it ſhall Remove, and nothing ſhall be unpoſſible unto you*, Mat. 17. 20. And this Faith is reckon'd as one of the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit. *To another Faith, by the ſame Spirit*, 1 Cor. 12. 9.

Queſt. What was the *Faith* that ſometimes, but more eſpecially in the *cure of Diſeaſes*, was required on him that received a Miracle, or the Perſon it was to be wrought upon?

Anſw. A Perſwaſion that God would enable the Wonder-worker to do the cure for, or ſhew the Miracle upon him. This alſo was another Requiſite. For *Paul ſtedfaſtly beholding the Creeple, and perceiving he had faith to be healed*, ſaid to him, *ſtand upright*, Act. 14. 9, 10. *Believe ye that I am able to do this*, ſaid *Chriſt to the blind Men? according to your Faith, ſo be it unto you*, Mat. 9. 28, 29. *If thou canſt do any thing*, ſaid the *Father of the Demoniack, have Compaſſion on us, and help us. Jeſus ſaid unto him, if thou canſt believe* I can, *all* miraculous *Things are poſſible* to be done *to him that believeth*, Mar. 9. 22, 23. And *in his own Country*, 'tis ſaid, *Chriſt did not many Miracles*,

Miracles, becauſe of their unbelief, Mat. 13. 58. or, as St. *Mark*, *he could not do them*, God, it ſeems, ſuſpending this miraculous aid, in the caſe of ſuch, whoſe unbelief rendred them unworthy of it, *Mark* 6. 4, 5.

Queſt. What is the *third*, and laſt of thoſe *extraordinary Gifts* which the *Holy Ghoſt* beſtowed upon the Apoſtles?

Anſw. The Gift of *ſtrange Tongues*, whereby they, who were all *Jews*, were able in an inſtant to Publiſh that Religion God had revealed to them, over all the world, and be underſtood by men of every Language.

Queſt. Was this given to the *Apoſtles?*

Anſw. Yes; viſibly at *the day of Pentecoſt*, when *the Holy Ghoſt deſcended upon each of them, in the ſhape of Cloven Tongues, like as of Fire, and they ſpake with other Tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance*, and *talked to Parthians*, and *Romans*, *Cretes*, and *Arabians*, and to *the devout men from every Nation under Heaven at that time* gathered together to *Jeruſalem*, to *every man in the Tongue wherein he was born*, Acts 2. 1. to 12. And at the *impoſition of the Apoſtles hands*, it was generally beſtowed on others afterwards. As on *the Diſciples at Epheſus, at the impoſition of Paul's hands*, Acts 19. 2, 6. on *Cornelius*, and his *Gentile Friends*, at *Peter's Preaching*; for *while he yet ſpake to them, the Holy Ghoſt fell on all them that heard the word, and they ſpake with Tongues, and magnified God*, Acts 10. 44, 45, 46. And ſo on others in great numbers,

numbers, particularly in the *Church of Corinth.*

Queſt. To what end were they thus endowed with all Languages?

Anſw. To enable them to Preach to all Nations, for they were Commiſſion'd to *teach all Nations*, Mat. 28. 19. And they could not teach them, without ſpeaking to every man in his own Language. And therefore whereſoever they came, the Spirit immediately made them as perfect in the Language of the Place, as they were in their own Mother Tongue.

Queſt. Had not ſome the Gift of *Tongues*, who were not ſent out to men of another Language?

Anſw. Yes; as particularly in the Church of *Corinth*, for there many would ſpeak in the *Aſſemblies*, where all, or moſt were *Greeks*, in *Strange Tongues*; which, becauſe *the Church did not underſtand*, St. *Paul* directs ſuch gifted Linguiſts, to *Pray* for another Gift of *interpreting Tongues*, to make ſuch enthuſiaſms intelligible to their Hearers, 1 *Cor.* 14. 2, 5, 13. In theſe *ſtrange Tongues* they *Preached*, v. 6. and *Prayed to God*, v. 14. And this, being an offering up both inſpired Prayers, and in inſpired Tongues, which are both his extraordinary Gifts, is called *Praying*, and *Singing*, *by*, or *with the Spirit*, v. 14, 15.

Queſt. To what end then ſerved theſe ſtrange Tongues, in ſuch Churches all of one Tongue?

* *Anſw.*

Anſw. Not to make known Religion indeed, becauſe the hearers did not underſtand them. But they ſerv'd to expreſs the Speakers Devotion, and ſo *edified himſelf*, 1 Cor. 14. 4. and as a *Sign*, to confirm our Religion, and ſo were an argument, as all other Miracles were, to prove it true to *Infidels*. *Tongues are for a ſign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not*, v. 22.

Queſt. Was there any Guilt ſubſervient to this, of ſpeaking with ſtrange Tongues?

Anſw. Yes; the Gift of *interpreting thoſe ſtrange Tongues*, when ſpoken either by themſelves, or others. --

Queſt. But I pray you what need of that? did not they that ſpoke theſe ſtrange Tongues underſtand themſelves?

Anſw. Yes; *he that ſpoke in an unknown Tongue, edified himſelf*, 1 Cor. 14. 4. and *he that gave Thanks in it, gave Thanks well*, as St. *Paul* ſays, v. 17. But in this exerciſe of ſtrange Tongues, the heat of Enthuſiaſm and Divine Rapture, was ſometimes ſo great, that the Speaker could not interpret himſelf as he ſpoke, nor remember it after that heat was over, ſo as to give an explication to thoſe that heard it. And this defect, the Gift of *interpreting Tongues* ſupplyed; which Gift, St *Paul* directs thoſe who had the other of ſpeaking with ſtrange Tongues, to beg of God, in order to their greater *uſefulneſs*. *Let him that ſpeaketh in an unknown Tongue, pray alſo that he*

he may interpret, *i. e.* do it with ſuch conſiſtency, and moderation of mind, as to be able afterwards to give the ſame, in other more intelligible words, *v.* 13. and orders, that when any ſpoke with Tongues, who were not thus qualified to explain themſelves, they ſhould ſpeak, not all at a time, as they ſometimes did, but *by courſe*, *and* have *one* ſtill to ſecond them, *to interpret* their ſtrange ſpeech, v. 27.

Queſt. By this I ſee what are the extraordinary *Gifts*, which the *Holy Ghoſt* beſtowed upon the *Apoſtles*, *viz.* the Gift of *inſpiration*, whereby they ſhould be infallibly inſtructed in their Religion; of *Tongues*, and *utterance*, whereby they ſhould intelligibly, and undauntedly expreſs and declare it; and of *Miracles*, whereby they ſhould undoubtedly prove and demonſtrate it to all the World.

Anſw. Yes.

Queſt. When *Chriſt* promiſed the *Holy Ghoſt* to his *Apoſtles*, he calls him by the Name of *Comforter*, Joh. 16. 7. What is meant by that?

Anſw. Firſt, that he ſhould be an *Advocate*, which is one ſence of the word *Paraclete*, to plead the Cauſe of *Chriſt* and his Religion, againſt all that oppoſed them. This he did moſt convincingly, in the miraculous Gifts already mentioned. And in this ſence, *Chriſt* ſays of him, that *when he is come*, *he will reprove*, or convince *the world of Sin*, *of Righteouſneſs*, *and of Judgment*, Joh. 16. 8. *Secondly*,

Secondly, a *Comforter*, which is another ſence of it, to ſupport them under all that troubled them. This is plainly another ſence, ſince he tells them of *ſending the Comforter*, becauſe *ſorrow had filled their hearts*, v. 6. And this Office he fulfill'd, by aſſuring them their Lord, whoſe death they lamented, was now alive again; by ſupplying his Place, in making their defence, and giving them aſſiſtance and direction; and by ſhewing them an happy end of all their Troubles, and preparing them for the Kingdom of Heaven.

Queſt. Is the *unpardonable Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, a Sin againſt theſe miraculous Gifts of his?

Anſw. Yes; for it was againſt the Gift of Miracles, and *caſting out Devils*, the *Phariſees* ſin'd, when he cautions them againſt this dreadful ſin, ſaying, *the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt ſhall never be forgiven*, Mat. 12. 24, 32.

Queſt. And what is the unpardonable ſin againſt them?

Anſw. Slandering, or Blaſpheming them, as the *Phariſees* there did, when they attributed them to *Magick*, and *ſaid, he caſt out Devils by Beelzebub*, v. 24. for it is expreſly called *ſpeaking againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, v. 32. and *Blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, v. 31. *And this he ſaid*, ſaith *St. Mark*, *becauſe they ſaid he hath an unclean Spirit*, Mar. 3. 30.

Queſt. What is meant, by *never forgiven in this world, nor in the world to come?*

Anſw.

Anſw. Not being pardonable under any diſpenſation or Religion, either *Jewiſh*, or *Chriſtian*, for the *Jews* looked on the *days of Meſſiah*, as a *later ſtate* and diſpenſation of the Church, to ſucceed their own: on which account, it is called *the laſt days*, Iſ. 2. 2. & Heb. 1. 2. and *the laſt time*, 1 Joh. 2. 18. and the *World to come*, Heb. 6. 5.

† *See Part 1. Ch. 2.* And † ſome ſins were to be atoneable among *Chriſtians*, for which there was no atonement among the *Jews*, ſince by *Chriſt they were to be juſtified from thoſe Things, from which they could not be juſtified by the Law of Moſes*, Acts 13. 39. And therefore when *Chriſt* ſays, this Blaſphemy *ſhall not be forgiven in this World, nor the World to come*, that is the ſame, as neither to be forgiven in the *Jewiſh* State while it laſted, nor the *Chriſtian*; neither *Moſes*, nor *He*, having provided any Sacrifice or expiation for it.

Queſt. Is Blaſpheming God the *Father*, or the *Son* unpardonable?

Anſw. No; *whoſoever ſpeaketh a word againſt the Son of man, it ſhall be forgiven him*, Mat. 12. 32. yea, *all manner of other Sin, and Blaſphemy, ſhall be forgiven unto Men*, v. 31.

Queſt. Why then will the Blaſphemy againſt the *Holy Ghoſt* never be forgiven? Is he more worthy than either the *Father*, or the *Son*?

Anſw. No; that is not the reaſon. But theſe his Gifts, are the laſt means of begetting Belief in men; and without *Faith*, and

and *Repentance* wrought by *Faith*, there is no Pardon. If men would not believe, but revile the *Son*, when he was among them; after he was taken up, the *Holy Ghoſt* was to come, and be his *Advocate*, and, by all the miraculous Gifts I have mentioned, gain credit from them. But if, inſtead of believing him, they ſhall go to *Blaſpheme* and Revile him, and ſlanderouſly call all his ſtupendious Gifts magical Tricks, and works of *Satan*; God is reſolved to endeavour no more with them, nor ever to bring them to Believe, and Repent, without which there is no Pardon. So that it is unpardonable, becauſe after it, God has decreed that Faith, and Repentance, ſhall be impoſſible. Of *Apoſtates*, ſays St. *Paul*, who committed this ſin, *it is impoſſible to renew them again to Repentance*, Heb. 6. 6.

Queſt. Theſe miraculous Gifts were wonderful vouchſafements: did not they evidence all that enjoy'd them, to be in Favour with God, and in a *juſtified ſtate*?

Anſw No; for they were beſtowed promiſcuouſly, on good and bad. *Balaam loved the wages of unrighteouſneſs*; yet he was a *Prophet*, 2. Pet. 2. 15, 16. *Judas* was *the Son of Perdition*; but he *wrought Miracles*, as well as the *other Apoſtles*, Mat. 10. 1, 4, 5, 8. And *at the laſt Day, many will plead*, that *in Chriſt's Name they Propheſied, and caſt out Devils, and did Wonders*: and yet he will bid them *depart from him*, becauſe they *wrought iniquity*, Mat. 7. 22, 23. 'Tis obedience, not miracles,

miracles, that will ſave our Souls, it being not the *workers of wonders*, but *workers of Righteouſneſs*, that God accepts of. And thereupon our Saviour *bid his Diſciples rejoyce*, not for *that the Devils were ſubject to them*, *but rather becauſe their Names were written in Heaven*, Luk. 10. 17, 18, 19, 20.

Queſt. Thus much may ſuffice, for the underſtanding of the *extraordinary Gifts* of the *Holy Ghoſt*.

But beſides his beſtowing theſe *Gifts*, you ſaid he has appointed ſeveral *Offices*, *for the Planting*, *and Eſtabliſhing Chriſt's Church and Religion*, what are thoſe *Offices*, which he is the Authour of?

Anſw. He gave ſome Apoſtles, the higheſt, and moſt extenſive power in the *Church*; *and ſome Prophets*, who foretold future Things, Expounded old, and utter'd new Propheſies; *and ſome Evangeliſts*, who writ the Goſpels, or preach'd the Word in unconverted Places, where it was never heard before; *and ſome Paſtors and Teachers*, or Biſhops and Presbyters, to govern and inſtruct the Church: All which he gave *for the perfecting of the Saints*, *the Work of the Miniſtry*, *and the edifying of the Body of Chriſt*, Eph. 4. 8, 11, 12. And *God hath ſet in the Church*, *firſt Apoſtles*, *ſecondarily Prophets*, *thirdly Teachers*, *after that Miracles*, *Governments*, *&c.* 1 Cor. 12. 28.

Queſt. For what end were theſe Offices appointed?

Anſw. For the *Government* and *Edification* of

of the Church, and the *Work of the Miniſtry*, in the Word, and Sacraments, and Prayers. They were given, ſaith St. *Paul*, *for the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Miniſtry, and for the edifying of the Body of Chriſt*, Eph. 4. 12.

Queſt. And were all theſe Offices to laſt through all Ages of the Church?

Anſw. No; *Apoſtles*, *Evangeliſts*, and *Prophets* were *Temporary* Offices, which lay in founding of the Church, and revealing *Chriſt*'s Religion by Inſpiration from himſelf. And this Church being once founded and built, and this Revelation being once committed to Writing, it remains a laſting Thing, and ſo needs not to be repeated a ſecond time. And therefore, when once they had perform'd this Work, in all after Ages there was no further need of them: But as for *Paſtors* and *Teachers*, to govern the Church, and ordain Succeſſors, and to miniſter the Word, and Prayers, and Sacraments, they will be equally wanted in every Age, and therefore the *Holy Ghoſt* has appointed them to continue always. *Go, Baptiſe all Nations, teaching them to obſerve all my Commandments. And lo!* in ſuch Teaching and Baptiſing, *I am with you always, even to the end of the World*, Mat. 28. 19, 20. And tho, as I ſay, ſome of the Offices mentioned by St. *Paul* were neceſſary only in the firſt Age; yet others, which are equally neceſſary to the *edifying of the Church*, and *the Work of the Miniſtry*, in

every Age, are to continue, as he ſays, *till we all, i. e.* all Chriſtians that are, and all that ſhall be, *come in the Unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man, unto the Meaſure of the Stature of the Fulneſs of Chriſt.* So that the Church is to enjoy the Benefit of them to the Worlds end, *Eph.* 4. 12, 13.

Queſt. Since all that are at any time in theſe Offices die in one Age, how are they to be continued in the next?

Anſw. The *Biſhops* or *Governours* are ſtill to Ordain others, to remedy their own Mortality, and ſupply the Neceſſities of the Church, through all Times. Thus *Chriſt* told his *Apoſtles*, *As my Father ſent me*, viz. with a Power of Commiſſioning you to ſucceed in this Miniſtry when I am gone; *ſo ſend I you*, i. e. with Power of Ordaining others, in like manner of Succeſſion, *John* 20. 21. Purſuant to this, they Ordained *Biſhops* in all Churches, as St. *Paul* did *Titus* at *Crete*, and *Timothy* at *Epheſus*. And theſe, in a conſtant Succeſſion, were to Ordain others; as *Paul* bid *Timothy* give Commiſſions, as he had been Commiſſion'd himſelf, or *commit what he had heard of him, to faithful Men, who ſhould be able to teach others alſo*, 2 Tim. 1. 14. and 2. 2. And with theſe, in their Work of the Miniſtry, God would be preſent and aſſiſtant in all after Times, as he had been with the *Apoſtles* in the *Firſt* Age. In thus *Preaching* and *Baptizing*, *lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the World*,

World, Mat. 28. 20. *With you*, that is, with your ſelves during your own Lives, and your Succeſſors in all after times; which is the only way that in this Work he could be with them to the Worlds end, who were all to die in that Age.

Queſt. Is the *Holy Ghoſt* the Author of theſe Offices?

Anſw. Yes. *God hath ſet* theſe Officers *in the Church*, ſaith St. *Paul*, 1 Cor. 12. 28. and *Chriſt gave them* as a *Gift*, *after he was aſcended*, Eph. 4. 8, 11. That is, *God* gave them, and *Chriſt* gave them, by the *Holy Ghoſt*, who now, ſince *Chriſt* is gone to the *Right-hand of God*, is come down to his Church as his † *Subſtitute*, from whom both the Authority and Ability of all theſe Officers is derived. *Feed the Flock*, ſaith the *Apoſtle*, *over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made you Overſeers*, Acts 20. 28. And when *Chriſt* ordain'd his *Apoſtles*, giving them Power to *ſend others*, as *the Father gave him*, and to *remit* and *retain Sins*, *he breathed on them*, *and ſaid*, *Receive ye the Holy Ghoſt*, Joh. 20. 21, 22, 23. And accordingly, to ſhew from whom theſe Powers are derived, in Ordinations of theſe Officers, whether *Biſhops* or *Prieſts*, the Power is to this day conferr'd by ſaying, *Receive thou the Holy Ghoſt*.

† *Jo.* 16. 7. *and* c. 14. 16, 18.

Queſt. What ſhall we think then of thoſe who reject the *Miniſtry*, and caſt off all *Church-Officers* and *Ordinances*, and yet pretend in all this to be guided by the *Spirit*?

Anſw. You may be ſure it is not by that Spirit which *Chriſt* ſent down upon the *Apoſtles*, and which indited the holy *Scriptures*. For that Spirit gave theſe Offices, as the moſt neceſſary and greateſt Bleſſing to the Church: Whereas this Spirit of theirs, plucks up what he planted, and endeavours to aboliſh and overthrow them.

Queſt. From what you have ſaid, I perceive how infinitely we are obliged to the *Holy Ghoſt*, for that care he has taken, in Planting and Propagating *Chriſt*'s Church and Religion, both in the *miraculous Gifts* he beſtowed upon his Church ſo amply in the *Firſt Age*, and in the *Offices* and *Governments* he has appointed to Feed and Rule it in all ſucceeding Ages.

But beſides theſe *extraordinary* Gifts, beſtowed only on ſome, for the Propagation and Eſtabliſhment of *Chriſt*'s Church and Religion, you mention'd another ſort of Gifts for the effecting this Great Work of our Salvation, which the *Holy Ghoſt beſtows ordinarily, on Perſons of all Times and Places.* What Gifts are thoſe?

Anſw. All the *inward Graces* and *vertuous Endowments*, which are neceſſary to the Salvation of all particular Perſons, ſuch as the *Apoſtle* reckons up, Gal. 5. *The Fruits of the Spirit are Love, Joy, Peace, Long-ſuffering, Gentleneſs, Goodneſs, Faith, Meekneſs, Temperance, and ſuch like*, v. 22, 23. Particularly, he excites *Devotion*, and helps to raiſe in us holy Deſires, and Life and Quickneſs

neſs in our Prayers. There, ſays the *Apoſtle, the Spirit helps our Infirmities, making Interceſſion for the Saints, according to the Will of God,* by inſpiring them *with ſuch* Deſires and *Groanings as cannot be uttered,* Rom. 8. 26, 27.

Queſt. Is the *Holy Ghoſt* the Author of all theſe inward Graces in us, and can we not have them without his Gift?

Anſw. No; for *the Renewing of our Nature* is aſcribed *to the Holy Ghoſt,* Tit. 3. 5. And St. *Paul* calls all the recited Virtues, *Fruits of the Spirit,* Gal. 5. 22. And *no Man can come to me,* ſaith *Chriſt, i. e.* believe on me, and obey me, *except the Father, which hath ſent me, draw him,* John 6. 44. All our Graces come from God, and muſt be ſought of him. And becauſe we are daily in want of them, we are taught by our Lord himſelf to pray, *Hallowed be thy Name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, Deliver us from Evil, &c.* as conſtantly as we ſay, *Give us this Day our Daily Bread.*

Queſt. If the Holy Spirit gives theſe, then any Man, that has them, may know he has Grace, and that the *Holy Ghoſt* dwells and acts in him?

Anſw. Yes; if he is affected and influenc'd not only by ſome few, but by all of them. For they are the Fruits of the Spirit, as I noted; and where we ſee the genuine Fruit, we may make ſure of the Principle that gives Birth to it; as our Saviour ſaid, *the Tree is known by its Fruit,* Luke 6.

43, 44. Mat. 7. 16, 20. And accordingly they are given as Marks of Grace, and a ſure Proof that Men belong to God, in the *Scriptures*. *Hereby know we that we know him, and that we are in him, if we keep his Commandments*, 1 John 2. 3, 5. *We know that we have paſſed from Death unto Life, becauſe we love the Brethren*, 1 John 3. 14. *He that doth Righteouſneſs is righteous; in this the Children of God are manifeſt*, 1 John 3. 7, 10.

Queſt. But may not an ill Man have ſome Good in him? And have not ſeveral practiſed ſome Virtues, who yet were void of the *Spirit*, and *ſaving Grace?*

Anſw. Yes: For *Herod*, an ill Man, *heard John Baptiſt gladly, and did many things*, Mark 6. 20. And *the Fooliſh Virgins* kept pace in ſome Points with *the Wiſe*, Mat. 25. 1, 2. Either that general Grace, which is common to all Perſons, or their particular Inclination, or Intereſt, or Natural Conſcience, can carry on Men, who are Enemies to God in the main, to the Performance of ſome Duties. And therefore I ſaid theſe Vertues are a Sign of the Spirit, and of Saving Grace, not when ſome few or more of them meet by chance in an otherwiſe evil Man; but only in thoſe who have a general Care, and Conſcientious Regard to all of them.

Queſt. You have ſhewn how theſe Graces are the Fruits of the Spirit, and the Gift of God. But ſince God's Spirit is thus to work

work them in us, may we not leave God's Work to himſelf, and think our ſelves free from any Care or Pains about them?

Anſw. No, by no means: For he that made us Men, will not alſo make us Saints, without our ſelves. He created us by himſelf alone, but will renew and ſave us only through our Concurrence with him.

Queſt. In carrying on this Work of God, what muſt we do towards it?

Anſw. Our *Heart* and *Will* muſt go along with it, and our *Care* and *Endeavour* toot.

Queſt. When God's Spirit begins any Grace or Vertue in us, muſt our Heart go along with it, and are we readily to embrace and make choice of it?

Anſw. Yes; for he will not force an unwilling Mind into Goodneſs. And therefore our own Wills are call'd upon, when we are preſs'd to become Good. *I have ſet before you Life and Good, Death and Evil: Chuſe Life*, Deut. 30. 15, 19. And when we obey ſuch Calls, ſome good Tempers of our Wills are noted as the Cauſe of it. *The Word*, and Grace accompanying it, *brought forth Fruit*, becauſe it wat *received in an honeſt and good Heart*, Luke 8. 15. And if we refuſe them, and continue Bad, our own Wills ſtill are charged with it. *Ye will not come to me, that ye might have Life*, Joh. 5. 40. and, *Why will ye die, O Houſe of Iſrael?* Ezek. 18. 31, 32.

Queſt. And when our Heart is thus bent upon any Graces and Good Things, muſt

our Care and Endeavour alſo be put forth in attainment of them?

Anſw. Yes; for God gives theſe Graces as a Bleſſing upon our own Care and Pains, and works them in us, when we work with him: So that they are to be the Fruit of our Induſtry, as well as of his Bounty. God calls to us, *Make you clean*, Iſa. 1. 16. *Turn your ſelves*, Ezek. 18. 30, 32. as well as we pray to him, *Turn thou us*, Jer. 31. 18. and, *Give us clean Hearts*, Pſal. 51. 10.

Queſt. But is not God before-hand with us, and gives us ſome Grace, before we endeavour any thing? *I was found of them that ſought me not*, ſaith the *Prophet*, Iſa. 65. 1.

Anſw. Yes; the Grace of *outward Revelations* and *Opportunities*. Theſe prevent our Care, and are given before we ask them. In this Kingdom, for Inſtance, we have the Light of the Holy Scriptures, the Guidance and Care of Paſtors, the Benefit of Publick Aſſemblies, and the Protection of Laws for Chriſtianity, which is not ſo in *Heathen* Countries. And we have the *Scriptures* in our own Language, and Purity of Doctrine, and a truly Primitive, Edifying way of Worſhip, which is not ſo in many Chriſtian Nations. And all theſe, with other Advantages, came to us unasked; we did not ſeek them, but were born to them. And of theſe *Iſaiah* ſpeaks, who is not treating of inward Aſſiſtances, but of outward Revelations, which God would make to the *Gentiles*,

Gentiles, who made *no inquiry after them*, but had the Revelations brought to them. For the *Heathen* World did not ſeek out to the *Apoſtles*, but the *Apoſtles* ſought them.

Queſt. And doth not he prevent us too, with *good Deſires*, and *inward Motions?*

Anſw. Yes, he doth, with the *Firſt* Motions and Beginnings of his Grace. But as for the Ripening of theſe, and our growing up to a Maſtery over our Luſts, and a Saving Pitch; that requires our own Care and Endeavours, which theſe Firſt Stirrings of Grace muſt awaken in us. And when we do ſo endeavour after them, God will ſtill give more Grace, and, by his Spirit, effect in us ſuch Virtues as we labour after; but he will withdraw what he has already given, if we are idle, and labour not at all. For concerning this Improvement of God's Grace, by our own Care and Pains, our Saviour ſays, *To him that hath, ſhall be given, and he ſhall have abundance: but from him that hath not*, i. e. hath not improved what God beſtowed, *ſhall be taken away even what he hath*, Mat. 25. 29.

Queſt. God's Giving then is only an Encouragement for our Seeking; ſince he gives thoſe Graces, as he gives our Food and Maintenance, not to idle, careleſs Men, but only to ſuch as diligently and wiſely labour after them?

Anſw. Very true; and therefore we are preſs'd to work them out our ſelves, by that

that very Reaſon *work out your own Salvation, for it is God that worketh in you, both to will, and to do,* Phil. 2. 12, 13.

Queſt. What way ſhould we ſeek theſe Graces of the Spirit, that by God's Bleſſing we may attain them?

Anſw. Firſt, Pray for them. *If any man lack Wiſdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all Men Liberally, and upbraideth not, and it ſhall be given him,* Jam. 1. 5. And *God will give the Holy Spirit to thoſe that ask him,* Luk. 11. 13.

Queſt. And muſt we pray *in Faith*, that is, ask with an expectation to Receive them?

Anſw. Yes; for God cannot bear to ſee us queſtion his kindneſs, or diſtruſt his Promiſe. Our diſtruſt is enough to make him deny us any thing; but we are ſure to receive the Graces he has promiſed, if we dare confide in him. *Whatſoever ye ſhall ask, Believing, you ſhall receive,* Mat. 21. 22. And *if any man lack Wiſdom, let him ask of God. But let him ask in Faith, nothing wavering,* Jam. 1. 5, 6.

Queſt. What other ways of ſeeking theſe Graces, would you direct to?

Anſw. Secondly, a frequent, and ſerious uſe of the *Holy Sacrament*. That is no unfruitful Ordinance, but conveys Spiritual ſtrength into our Souls, as *Bread* doth to our Bodies. This the Scripture intimates, when *Chriſt's Euchariſtical Body* is called *Bread*, Joh. 6. 51, 55. And when the *eating*

Bread, and *drinking Wine*, is called *the Communion of his Body and Blood*, that is, the Communication of all those Graces, and Benefits to us, which were purchased by them, 1 *Cor.* 10. 16.

Quest. Have you any other Rules?

Answ. Yes. *Thirdly*, with Prayers, and Sacraments we must joyn a Diligent use of *wise* and *likely means* of attaining the Desired Graces. When we seek to God for Daily Bread and maintenance, it must be in following our Callings, with Prudent Care, and Diligence. And in like sort, when we seek to him for any Virtues, it must be in the use of such Probable, and Discreet ways, as are like to make us Masters of them.

Quest. Would you add any thing further, about the use of these means?

Answ. Yes. *Fourthly*, that it be with a *Faith in God's Power* and *Spirit*, and a confidence of success through that Assistance. God has promised his Grace and Spirit, to make us Good; as well as his Mercy to Pardon us, when we are so. And we must eye this Promise of his Powerful assistance, when we set about any Vertue and Goodness. A Faith in his Power, is as necessary to make us Good; as Faith in his Mercy towards all good Men, is to make us desirous of being Good. And to this Faith, the *Scripture* Directs us in working out our Obedience. *Work out your own Salvation, for it is God that worketh in you,*

you, and ſo ſtrengthen your Hands in that expectation, *Phil.* 2. 12, 13. And *we are kept by the Power of God, through Faith*, viz. in that Power *unto Salvation*, 1 Pet. 1. 5.

Queſt. Is there any other Rule to be obſerved, in ſeeking theſe Graces of the Holy Spirit?

Anſw. Yes. *Fifthly*, that in all the Time we are endeavouring after them, we do nothing to *Grieve*, or *annoy him*. 'Tis with him, as 'tis with every ingenious Perſon, he grows weary of ſtaying, where he finds he is not welcome, and where men are ſtill taking occaſion to diſpleaſe, and paſs Affronts upon him. And therefore, when we are warn'd againſt ſeveral ſins, to conclude all, we are cautioned *not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God*, which is to reſtrain us from them, *Eph.* 4. 30.

Queſt. What things will grieve him?

Anſw. The *Apoſtle* there particularly mentions *obſcene Talk*, and *corrupt Communication*, ver. 29. But he is grieved by our conſenting to all ſorts of Sin, for he is a declared Enemy to all of them. Eſpecially, if we commit any, againſt many of his ſuggeſtions, and checks of Conſcience: As *David* did in the *Murder of Uriah*, after which he was ſore afraid, leſt God ſhould *take his Holy Spirit from him*, Pſ. 51. 11. or if we have ſinned our ſelves up to a Cuſtom; or take delight in ſinning.

Queſt. Doth it offend him knowingly to *Neglect*, and *Slight* his good ſuggeſtions?

Anſw.

Anſw. Yes; for he is concerned to have them take Place, ſince he ſuggeſts nothing to us, but what is moſt agreable to his own moſt Holy Inclinations, the Honour of God, and our Eternal Happineſs. *Let us have*, that is, uſe *Grace, that we may ſerve God acceptably*, Heb. 12. 28. And therefore let this paſs for a *Sixth* Rule of obtaining his ſaving Graces, to *cheriſh the Good Suggeſtions* he inſpires, and always improve the Grace he has already given, to bring down more from him. For, *to him that hath, ſhall be given, and he ſhall have abundance*, Mat. 25. 29. In things of Truſt, this is the way of all Diſcreet Perſons, and ſo 'tis his.

Queſt. If we idely neglect, and fail to cultivate our Preſent Grace then, he will withhold ſuch further Meaſures, as he Deſigned us?

Anſw. Yes; and after long Patience, at laſt *withdraw the former* too. For, *from him that hath not, ſhall be taken away*, even *that which he hath*, Mat. 25. 29. Thus *Felix*, when he *trembled* at St. *Paul*'s Sermon, not fomenting that Fear, nor proceeding to improve, and penitently reſolve upon it, fell back, and as we have cauſe to think, heard no more of it, *Act.* 24. 25.

Queſt. Theſe ſeem Good and plain Rules, for the attainment of theſe Graces of the Spirit. And when we are careful to uſe them, may we be confident of his Gift, and promiſe our ſelves that he will beſtow them? *Anſw.*

Answ. Yes; for therein he fulfils the Design of *Christ* that sent him, and gratifies his own inclination. And this God has promised, and ordered us to expect from him. Bidding us *seek, and we shall find*, Mat. 7. 7. and declaring, how *to him that hath, shall be given*: and *God will give the Holy Spirit to those that ask him.*

Quest. You have shewed me, how we are to attain the Graces of the Spirit. But if they are thus to be our own Attainment, how are they God's Gift? And if, as you said before, God gives them, what need we take all this care, and Pains, to acquire them?

Answ. If they were an absolute Gift, indeed, we should not need to do it. For when a Gift is absolute, no Conditions are required on our part: And then, no defects in us can hinder, nor any dispositions of ours further, and make way for it. It depends not on any thing in us, but is purely God's Act: So that nothing is left for us to do towards it. But these Graces, are not an absolute, but conditional Grant: before the Spirit gives them, he requires something towards them, and works them not in all Men, but only in those who are prepared for them. Some things hinder them, and they are to be carefully avoided: Others further them, and they are to be diligently pursued. So that we are not to expect them, from God's Grace and Spirit alone, unless we our selves also, in such sort

ſort as I have deſcribed, concur and joyn with him.

Queſt. By what you have ſaid, I perceive how careful the *Holy Ghoſt* is, to fill our Souls with gracious diſpoſitions. Doth he not alſo refreſh them, with ſuch *Spiritual Joy* and *Comforts*, as are apt to reſult from them?

Anſw. Yes. For St. *Paul* reckons *joy, and Peace*, as well as *Meekneſs and Temperance*, for *Fruits of the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 22, 23. and Prays, *that the God of Hope, would fill them with all Joy, and Peace in Believing, and that they may abound in Hope, through the Power of the Holy Ghoſt*, Rom. 15. 13. And St *Luke* ſays, *the Churches walked in the Comfort of the Holy Ghoſt*, Act. 9. 31. And St. *Peter* of the *Diſperſed Strangers*, that *in believing, they rejoyced with Joy unſpeakable*, 1 Pet. 1. 8. And therefore good Chriſtians muſt not affect Scruples, or think it any ſign of Spirituality, to be of a Down-looked and Melancholy Religion: Since Joy and Peace, a Filial Hope and ingenious chearfulneſs, are Fruits that he loves to produce in them.

Queſt. But doth the *Holy Ghoſt* inſpire theſe comforts into all minds, wherein he diſplays his ſaving Graces, which are the Ground of them?

Anſw. He is inclined to do it in all. And doth it in one degree, or other; not always producing Raptures, and Tranſports of Mind, indeed, but eaſe and quiet-

quietneſs, an inward complacency and comfortable Hope, if they themſelves do not put a Bar againſt him. But ſome minds he ſanctifies, are of a Melancholly Temper, that is, prone to ſadneſs and ſuſpicions, eſpecially of themſelves. Or are frighted by undue-thoughts of God, as if he were Stern and Rigorous, ſoon offended, but very difficult to be reconciled. Or miſtake the Goſpel Terms, as if they were over-rigid, and exacted more than can poſſibly, or at leaſt ordinarily, be performed. Or labour under ſome other cloudy, and afflicting Error, or diſtemper of mind, which hinders a moſt comfortable Religion, and peaceful Piety, from creating any Joy or Comfort, in them.

Queſt. But when there are none of theſe intrinſick impediments, to interpoſe betwixt his Joy and them, doth not he ſometimes *Arbitrarily*, and without any provocation, withdraw himſelf, and hide his Face, as if he were diſpleaſed with them? Which withdrawing, is oft given as the cauſe of many Good mens Grief and Dejection, and is what ſome call *Spiritual Deſertion.*

Anſw. At this rate, indeed, all Spiritual Comfort muſt needs be moſt variable and uncertain, as depending, not on any Conſtancy of good and comfortable Diſpoſitions in themſelves, but on the Arbitrarineſs of ſuch unprovoked withdrawings, to try Experiments upon Men. But this,

I think, is all humane invention; the *Scripture*, on the contrary, teaching us, that when *Sinners purify their hearts, and draw nigh to him, God* doth not withdraw himſelf, and ſhrink away, but *draws nigh to them*, Jam. 4.8. It is an imputation on this good Spirit, not at all agreeing with his inclination, which is to be an immutable lover of goodneſs, and of good men, to be unalterably pleaſed with them, whilſt they do what is pleaſing to him, and to delight in having them take pleaſure and joy in him. It ſeems very oppoſite to his Office and Undertaking. For his Work and Office, as I have ſhewn, is to engender Peace and Comfort, as well as Goodneſs, in the hearts of his Servants. And ſince that is his buſineſs, he will be as conſtant in purſuing it, and no more withdraw his Comforts, than he doth his Graces from them, without being juſtly provoked thereto by ſome act of their own. Nay, on the contrary, when their own melancholly humours, or miſperſuaſions, have intercepted his joyful preſence from good men, he is ready with the light of his Countenance to break thro' that darkneſs, and, in great pity, very often reſtores that Comfort to their minds, which their own errour, or diſtemper, had driven from it. So that theſe arbitrary and unprovoked deſertions, whether in Grace, or Comforts, as they have no foundation in *Scripture*, but there meet with oppoſition; ſo are they not ſuitable to the Holy and good Spirit's na-

tural Genius, or his Undertaking and Office. He always loves and delights in good men, and never voluntarily withdraws himself, but is always driven from them.

CHAP. IX.

Of the Holy Catholick Church, and the Communion of Saints.

The Contents.

No assurance of Salvation by Christ, but in his Church. This Church Holy. And Catholick. Admission into it by Baptism; when regularly perform'd in any one, valid in all Churches. Excommunication is so too. This Church is one Body, by external visible unity. Of the Communion of Saints in this Church. Of their visible union in Faith or Doctrine. And in Prayers and Devotion. Of communicating in Publick Prayers. A Sin to separate without just cause. Imposing Sins, or Errours, as Conditions of Communion, is a just cause. Not Lawful to separate for Things indifferent. Nor for better means of edification. Just to separate from a Church, that doth not impose her Corruptions, when her Errors in Faith overthrow the Foundation. That is, when she ceases to own the one true God. Or denys Jesus to be the Christ, or Salvation by his Merits and Mediation. Owning Jesus to be the Christ, implies,

plies, owning the Articles of the Apoſtles Creed, which contains all Fundamentals. Whilſt any Churches hold to this Creed, which is the Foundation, Errors in other things do not unchurch them. But ſuch Erroneous are in a worſe ſtate, than Orthodox Chriſtians. Nor is her Communion to be deſerted meerly for ſuch Errors, tho' very groſs, if ſhe doth not impoſe them. Juſt to ſeparate from a Church of a corrupt Worſhip, when ſinful things pollute her Publick Offices. Or when good Devotions are put up in a ſtrange Language. Not for Rites and Cuſtoms about indifferent Matters. Nor juſt to ſeparate for ſcandalous Members, where a Churches conſtitution is faultleſs. Nor tho' it neglect Diſcipline, which ſhould reform them. Of keeping Fellowſhip with the Apoſtles, by ſubmitting to our lawful Biſhops their Succeſſors. Chriſtians to communicate in Affections, in Alms, and Temporal good Things.

Queſt. WHat is the *Ninth* Article in the *Creed?*

Anſw. The *Holy Catholick Church*, the *Communion of Saints?*

Queſt. Is there no aſſurance of Salvation by *Chriſt*, but in his *Church?*

Anſw. No; for *Baptiſm*, whereby we are made members of the Church, is compared to *Noah*'s *Ark*, whereinto all were to enter, that would not *periſh with the World*, 1 Pet. 3. 20, 21. *Chriſt* is repreſented to us, as the *Head of his Church*, and the *Saviour*

of the Body, Eph. 5. 23. And *God daily added to the Church such as should be saved*, saith St. *Luke*, Act. 2. 47. In the Church, all good men have a sure claim to God's favour, by Promises and Compacts, which ingage him in Faithfulness. But out of it, they stand to courtesie, and can build, at best, only on presumptions, and uncovenanted mercies; the Covenant which God seals with us, respecting his Church, and being proposed and ratified in the Word which it preaches, and in the Sacraments which it dispences.

Quest. Must not this make all careful to be Members of this Body, and keep in Communion with *Christ*'s Church, who profess Christianity?

Answ. Most certainly, as without which, by their Religion, there is not only a want of the set means and opportunities, but also of all express Contracts and Promises of Salvation. Our Saviour *Christ* has appointed not only the Christian Religion, which all are to believe and practise: but the Christian Church too, wherein they are to profess that Faith, and Communicate as Members. And the same Baptism, that lists us Professors of his Religion, makes us Members of his Church also.

Quest. Why is the Church called *Holy*?

Answ. Because it is a Body of men that is *Holy*, that is, *separated from the rest of the World*, and *dedicated to Almighty God. Ye are a chosen Generation, an Holy Nation, a Peculiar People*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. And because, whatever

whatever they prove in reality, their Religion is a Profeſſion of Holineſs, as their *Baptiſmal* Vow, which is made at their entrance on Chriſtianity, ſufficiently declares. *To the Church at Corinth, called to be Saints,* 1 Cor. 1. 2.

Queſt. Why is it called *Catholick*?

Anſw. To ſhew its *Univerſality*, and that it is not confined to one Nation or Place, as the *Jewiſh* Church was. And the *Catholick Church* notes the whole Body of Chriſtians, diffuſed through all places, and enduring through all times. The Church is alſo call'd *Catholick*, in relation to the *Faith* it holds, which ought to be the ſame in all Places. And in this ſenſe, *particular* Churches are ſometimes ſtiled *Catholick*, meaning thereby, that they are Orthodox, and live in the Faith and Communion of the Catholick Church, not of any Heretical Combinations.

Queſt. The Church is Catholick, as containing all Places and Perſons: but it is not univerſal as to ſome Acts, which being done any where, are valid, and equally bind every where?

Anſw. Yes; it is Catholick in the Admiſſion into its *Baptiſm*, which being duly adminiſtred in one Church, makes a man free of the whole Chriſtian Society, and gives him a Right to all Chriſtian Priviledges in all other Churches. So that go where he will, every Church ſhall own him for a Chriſtian, and admit him to Communion,

nion, without requiring him to be Baptiſed over again.

Queſt. So that a true member of *Chriſt*, who is allow'd to Pray, and receive the Sacrament in one Church, ought to be allowed the ſame in every Church?

Anſw. Yes; and ſo they were in ancient times, when upon producing their Certificates, and *Commendatory Letters* from their own Churches, Strangers and Travellers were owned as *Brethren*, and admitted to Communion in the remoteſt Places.

Queſt. And is it not fit they ſhould ſeek this Communion, whereſoever they paſs?

Anſw. Yes; very fit, to ſhew themſelves true *Catholicks*, and that they own the Chriſtians of all other places, as Brethren, and Fellow-members. But this muſt be only where they may be admitted to Communion upon lawful terms. For when Churches will ſuffer none to Pray, or Communicate with them, without profeſſing ſome Errors, or joyning in ſome forbidden Practice, there is no ſeeking to aſſociate with ſuch Aſſemblies.

Queſt. Can you ſhew this *Catholick* efficacy in other Acts?

Anſw. Yes; not to inſiſt on others; *ſecondly*, in excluding Perſons out of the Church by *Excommunication*. For if a man is juſtly excommunicated in one Place, the Church, as I ſhall ſhew, being but one, that is valid and ought to ſtand, till he is duly looſed and reconciled again, in all places. He

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is cast out by *Christ*, who, for any unchristian Practices, is regularly and justly bound, or excommunicated by the Church of *Christ*, for *whatsoever you bind or retain on Earth*, saith he, *shall be bound and retain'd in Heaven*, Joh. 20. 23. and Mat. 18. 18. And whilst *Christ* himself rejects, 'tis not for any other Church of *Christ* to receive him. And thus it was in the Ancient Church: where, if any for Heretical stubbornness, or lewd Lives, were cut off from *Christ* by their own Church, no † other Churches would admit them, 'till they had made their peace again. And to prevent any over-sight, and unwary Communion with an Excommunicate Person; when any Strangers and Travellers, especially whom they had ground to suspect, came to them from Foreign parts, they would not admit them to joyn in their Church-Offices, till they produced their * *Communicatory Letters*, to certifie their being in Communion with their own Churches. And this must make all good Christians extreamly careful, by all innocent ways, to keep the peace of their own Church; and never contumaciously provoke, or proudly slight it, presuming, if it casts them out, they may do as well, by being let in, and harboured by others. Which if all *Christ's* Members really believed, *Church Discipline* would not be so precarious a thing; nor would any think, as I fear too many do, that a Church is beholding to them, for sticking to her, and keeping in her Communion.

† *Canon. Apost.* 10. 12. 32. *Et Concil.* Nicen. *prim. Cap.* 5. *& Ep. Cler. Rom. ad* Cypr. *Ep.* 30. *ed. Oxon.*

* *Canon. Apost.* 12. *vid. Zonar. in loc. & Cap.* 33.

Queſt. What is it to *Believe the Holy Catholick Church?*

Anſw. Not only to believe there is ſuch a Church, but alſo, agreeable to that belief, in all thoſe Acts which declare our Union with it, to adhere to it as its Members, againſt all Factious Innovators, and Dividers.

Queſt. Is this Church but *one Body?*

Anſw. No. *For we are call'd to peace in one Body*, Col. 3. 15. and there is but *one Body, as one Spirit, one Lord, one Baptiſm*, Eph 4. 4, 5.

Queſt. And is it to be one, by an *External, Viſible* Unity?

Anſw. Yes; for an *external Union*, in the *common Offices* and *Advantages* of the *Society*, muſt ſhew it to be, what the *Scripture* calls it, *one Body*. It muſt have ſuch an Union, as may be taken notice of by Men, and from whence they will ſay, *Chriſtians*, are all of *one Religion. I pray not for theſe alone, but for all that ſhall believe on me, through their word: That they may all be one*, and that ſo viſibly, *that the World may* ſee it, and thereby *know and believe, that thou haſt ſent me, and haſt loved them, as thou haſt loved me*, Joh. 17. 20, 21, 22, 23. And this *viſible union*, is their maintaining *one Communion*, and *Church-Fellowſhip*, i. e. their readineſs to *Pray*, and *Communicate* together, and join in all Acts of Chriſtian *Worſhip, Faith*, and *Charity* with each other. *By this ſhall all Men know, that you are my Diſciples, if ye love one another.* If ye *Love one*

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another, i. e. if ye love ſo as to unite, not only in *Faith* and *Affection*, but in *Worſhip* too, and *pray and communicate together*. For a readineſs to worſhip God together, muſt ſhew as much as any thing their unity in *Diſciplеſhip*, and that they are all Servants of one and the ſame Lord and Maſter, *Joh.* 13. 35. And accordingly, *Prayers* and *Sacraments*, are ſet down among the *Bonds of Union*, which compact together the Members of this *one Church*. Of the *Euchariſt*, ſays St. *Paul*, *we being many are made one Body*, by being *all partakers of that one Bread*, 1 Cor. 10. 17. And of *Baptiſm*, *we are all Baptized into one Body*, 1 Cor. 12. 13. and *as many as have been Baptized into Chriſt*, *are all one in Chriſt Jeſus*, Gal. 3. 27, 28. And among thoſe various ways, whereby the Church becomes *one Body*, he lays down, as *one Faith*, which they all Profeſs: So *one Baptiſm*, whereof they all partake; *one God, and Father of all*, whom they all invocate with *one Hope*; and *one Lord*, whom they all ſerve and worſhip, *Eph.* 4. 4, 5, 6.

Queſt. Doth this *viſible union* imply a profeſt ſubjection of the whole Church, to one *viſible Head*, the *Biſhop of Rome?*

Anſw. No; that is a Title too haughty to be aſſumed, and a Power too extenſive to be managed by any one Perſon. Beſides, in Scripture, there is not the leaſt mention of this univerſal Headſhip. No, not in the † Liſts of *Church-Powers*, and *Miniſtrations*, where

† 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. *Eph.* 4. 11.

where this, which is the higheſt of all others, could not be left out. Nor, in Silencing any *Hereſies*, or deciding any *Controverſies* and *Diſputes*, of which there was great number then in the Church; and for determination whereof, as it ought to have been uſed, ſo 'tis not conceivable, had it then been owned, but the *Apoſtles* would have directed and ſent men to it, or the Litigants themſelves would have appeal'd to its ſentence. Among the *Apoſtles*, our Bleſſed Lord precludes all pretence to ſuch Power, telling *the* † *Twelve*, when they were at *Strife who ſhould be higheſt* in Empire and *Lordſhip*, that one of them ſhould not bear Rule, and *exerciſe Authority* over the reſt, *Luke* 22. 24, 25, 26. And as for St. *Peter*, in particular, he ſet up no claim of Power over the other *Apoſtles*, but bore himſelf in all things towards them, and was correſpondently treated by them as a Brother. In any common Debates, and particularly in the *Council of Jeruſalem*, he did not ſo much as preſide, as St. *James* there † ſeems rather to have done, but as an Equal, gave his Reaſons, and his Voice among them, *Act.* 15. 7. When his actings ſeem'd very *Novel* and *Doubtful*, as his *going in to* Cornelius, *and his Gentile Friends*, the *Brethren of the Circumciſion* freely required an Account thereof, and ſtifly contended with him, *Act.* 11. 2. And when they were really *Blame-worthy*, as his *diſſimulation was at Antioch*, St *Paul*, like his Com-Peer *Apoſtle*, openly

† *ver.* 14.

† *ver.* 19.

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openly withstood, and *rebuked him*, Gal. 2. 11, 12, 13, 14. These, with sundry other like Passages, shew how unknown such Universal Headship was in the *Apostles* time. And the same may be made appear of the Church, in the Ages following. But that visible Unity, which all Christians were obliged to endeavour after in the Church, was preserv'd, as I say, by their joint readiness to communicate externally as Brethren, not by a profest subjection of all Churches to one Visible Head, and submitting to his Authority and Jurisdiction.

Quest. In this one Church, indeed, as it follows in the *Creed*, there must be a *Communion of Saints*; what is meant by *Saints*?

Answ. Christians. By their Enemies, they were styled **Hereticks*, or *Nazarenes*. But the Names they gave themselves, were the † *Elect*, the * *Brethren*, the † *Christians*, or many times the * *Saints*, as is very commonly seen in the *inscriptions*, or salutations, of the *Epistles* writ to them, by the holy *Apostles*.

* *Act.* 24. 5. 14.
† *Col.* 3. 12 *Tit.* 1. 1.
* *Act.* 9. 30 *&* 14. 2.
† *Act.* 11. 26.
* *Rom.* 1. 7. 1 *Cor.* 14. 33. *Jude* 3.

Quest. And what is the *Communion of these Saints*, or *Christians*?

Answ. Their *joining in common* in those things, which make them Christians, or in *the common Offices and concerns of Christianity*. There must be Communion, because of their Unity as one Body. And this Communion must be in something sensible, to shew a visible Unity, which the World shall see, and reflect upon, as I noted from our Saviour.

Quest.

Queſt. In what doth this Communion conſiſt?

Anſw. In adhering to the ſame *Doctrine*, *Government*, and *Worſhip*, both in *Prayers*, and *Sacraments*. For in theſe St. *Luke* places the Communion of the Primitive Church. *They continued ſtedfaſtly in the Apoſtles Doctrine, and Fellowſhip, and breaking of Bread, and in Prayers*, Act. 2.42.

Queſt. How muſt they keep to the ſame *Faith*, and *Doctrine*?

Anſw. By adhering to the *Holy Scriptures*, which ought to be every where the ſame Rule of it. And this Unity of Faith requiring, not only that they inwardly believe the ſame things, but alſo that they outwardly profeſs that Belief; to make Unity in this Profeſſion, in the *firſt* days there is mention of its being drawn up into a *Form of Sound words*, 2 Tim. 1. 13. This *Form* was, as ſome think, the *Apoſtles Creed*, which contains all that *Catholick* Doctrine, that is neceſſary to make any Man a Good Chriſtian, and which accordingly has been always received as the Form in *Baptiſm*, the moſt learned, not profeſſing more thereat, nor the moſt ignorant, leſs, through all Ages of the Church.

Queſt. This united Adherence to the *ſame Rule* and *Form*, will keep up a viſible Union in *Faith*, or *Doctrine*. But how can they all be thus united in *Prayers* and *Devotions*, not having one and the ſame Forms of Prayer and Liturgies?

Anſw.

Answ. By making them all according to the *same Rules*, and for the *same intents and purposes*. For all their Prayers are put up to one and the same God, for one and the same common mercies, on the same common terms and expectations, through the same common Merits and Mediation, and with the same common Affection and Brotherly concern for each other. Which make them in *Substance* the same Worship and Devotions, though put up in far distant places, or in different Forms of expression, or Languages.

Quest. According to what you said before of the *Unity of the Church*, the Members of this one Body, must not only worship, and pray like each other, but be ready to worship and pray together. But how can we communicate, or joyn in the use of Prayers, and Sacraments, with all Christians, who are so far spread, and widely distant in their Habitations?

Answ. With *Foreigners*, we are bound to joyn only as we meet with them. When we happen to be amongst them, or they amongst us, to shew we are all of the same Body, and that the Church is one, we must mutually Associate in worship, and receive each other to Communion, not sticking at any different Rites, and usages we find in other Churches, whilst there is no Sin in them. And as for the Christians of our *own Country*, there is no difficulty of joining thus in Worship, yea, and Government too

too with them, becauſe we are all under the ſame Laws and ſpiritual Guides, and live among them.

Queſt. Do you lay much weight upon *Publick Prayers*, and think the People ought to place much in attending the Churches Service, and Praying along with the *Miniſter*?

Anſw. Yes. For though God is ready to hear any Good man, by himſelf alone: Yet, for the Countenance of the Publick Worſhip, and the maintenance of good order, he ſets particular marks of Favour on thoſe Prayers which are offer'd to him in Publick, in concurrence with his *Miniſter*. Thus, in the *Jewiſh* Law, he appointed the *Prieſts* to *Offer*, and *burn incenſe* † *twice a Day*, for a *Daily Service*: the end whereof was, to preſent thoſe Prayers, which the * *People* offer'd up during this Miniſtration, as a ſweet ſmell to God in theſe Perfumes. And *David*, when he would deſire a great Recommendation to his Prayers, begs they may come fortifi'd with this advantage, to *be ſet forth in God's ſight like Incenſe*, Pſal. 141. 2. In like manner, the *four and twenty Elders* in the *Revelations*, that is, the Biſhops or Paſtors of the Church, are repreſented as *having every one*, like the *Jewiſh* Prieſts, *Golden Vials full of Odors, which are the Prayers of the Saints*, Rev. 5. 8. And when any Perſons in *ſickneſs*, would have Recourſe to *Prayers*, St. *James* directs them to preſent them by their Paſtors, and *ſend for*

† *Exod.* 30 7, 8.

* *Luke* 1. 10.

for the Elders of the Church, Jam. 5. 14. And *Jeſus Chriſt*, that *Angel*, who *at the Golden Altar, offers up the Prayers of all Saints*, is ſet out particularly as preſenting thoſe *Prayers* of theirs, *which came up with the ſmoke of incenſe*, Rev. 8. 3, 4. Not to mention the many other Advantages of Publick Prayer, as its being an addreſſing to God in a Body, and united Number, which in all Addreſſes, is confeſſedly a way of moſt Force and Power; and among them, perhaps, in conjunction with ſome of the beſt Souls, and very likely, with ſeveral more Holy, and dearer to him, than our ſelves, for *whoſe* * *ſake* he may be more like to hear our joint ſupplications, as he would *hear Job for his Friends*, when he would not *accept* either their *Prayer*, or *Sacrifice*, at their own hands, *Job* 42. 7, 8. And therefore it is a moſt fond and prejudicial, as well as Criminal and inexcuſable careleſneſs, for Men ſo ſloathfully and irreligiouſly, to neglect the *daily opportunities* of *Publick Prayers*, as, God knows, the generality do; yea, though under this neglect they do ſerve God at home, and have Prayers daily in their own Families. * *Gen.* 20. 7.

Queſt. You ſpeak of Communicating in Prayers, tho' there be no *Sermon*.

Anſw. Yes; for certainly no man, that comes to Church to ſerve God, if he underſtand what that is, can come more for Sermons, than for Prayers ſake. 'Tis for Prayers principally, that we are to come to the

the House of God, for *my House is the House of Prayer*, says God, *Isa.* 56. 7. and *Mat.* 21. 13. In these it is, that God's Worship doth chiefly consist. And by these especially, the Saints of all Times, and Places, thought to worship God. And these, above all our other Services, our Mediator is careful to offer up to God from us, that, which he is represented, as presenting *at the Golden Altar* from the Publick Assemblies, being *the Prayers of the Saints*, Rev. 8. 3, 4. And therefore it shews a very untaught and ignorant, as well as an Irreligious and Prophane Objector, to pretend he will not go to Church, because there is nothing but Prayers: for that is one of the chief things for which he should go thither, and the very Life and Spirit of our Service and Performance there.

Quest. But if we are bound thus, not only to Unity of Doctrine, but likewise to preserve Unity of Publick Worship and Communion, what shall we think of *Schism*, that is, *rending and dividing the Church*, either the whole Church, or that part where we live, and thereby makeing two Churches out of one? Is it a Sin to Erect new Churches, and separate in these Acts of Prayers and Sacraments, from the Body of a Church, or Nation?

Answ. Yes most certainly, and a very great one, except there be a *just Cause* of Separation. For so at *Corinth*, St. *Paul* told them, whilst *one was for* Paul, *and another for* Apollos, *and there were Divisions among*

among them, they were Carnal, and walked as men, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3, 4. And at *Rome*, he bids them *mark those who cause Divisions and Offences*, and not adhere and associate with, but *avoid them*, Rom. 16. 17. And this he spoke of Schism, whilst it was only an imperfect Birth, not gone on to open Separation, but only to such unquiet practices, and making of Parties, as would shortly end therein. For so, under all the *Corinthian Sidings* and *Divisions*, he declares that they *came together* still *in the same Church*, and met to partake in the same *Worship*, yea, and *Supper of our Lord*, 1 Cor. 11. 18, 20.

Quest. What is a *just Cause* of Separation?

Answ. A *Necessity of sinning, if we joyn with them.* Which always is, when some sinful things are imposed by any Society of Christians, as the Conditions of their Communion. We are to maintain the Churches Peace, only † *so far as lyes in us*; but we have no Power, or Liberty, to sin for it. The Church it self is called *Holy*, and therefore we must not think to shew our selves its true Members, by acting unholily. When without sinning we cannot continue with them, the voice of the *Scripture* is, *come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing*, 2 Cor. 6. 17.

† *Rom.* 12. 18.

Quest. And when doth a *Church* impose such *sinful things?*

Answ. When it will not allow us to be of its Communion, without Believing, or

Profeſſing, Errors of Faith; or committing ſins in Practice. As the Church of *Rome* doth, by caſting all out of its Communion, who will not believe that Churches Infallibility, and Tranſubſtantiation, which are Errors in Faith; nor Adore the Hoſt, Worſhip Images, Pray to Saints and Angels, and the like, which are ſins in Practice.

Queſt. It is no breach of Church-Unity then, nor Act of ſin, to ſeparate from ſuch Impoſers of unlawful things?

Anſw. No; but an adhering to *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles*, and the *Univerſal Church* of all Ages, who diſclaim theſe Corruptions. In theſe Particulars, the impoſing Church ſeparates her ſelf from *Chriſt*, and the *Catholick* Church, and therefore we keep the Unity of the *Catholick* Church, in adhering to it againſt her, who makes an upſtart Combination, and proves a *Schiſmatical* Divider.

Queſt. If there is no *juſt Cauſe* of Separating, but when we muſt needs commit ſome ſin in joyning with a Church, then it is never juſt to Separate for *things indifferent*?

Anſw. No; becauſe they lawfully may be done, and have no ſin in them. For all *ſin is the tranſgreſſion of a Law*, 1 Joh. 3. 4. and therefore there can be no ſin in indifferent things, ſince they would be no longer indifferent, but unlawful, if there were any Law againſt them. We are to *keep Peace as much as lyes in us*; and indifferent things certainly do, ſince they are no where forbid-

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den to us. Nay, in these things, a good Christian should be easie, not only in submitting to *Church-Laws*, but in complying with Innocent *Church-Customs*; St. *Paul* thinking it Argument sufficient in a little Case, to say, *we have no such Custome, nor the Churches of God*, 1 Cor. 11. 16.

Quest. Is it unjust also to Separate from a Church, on pretence the Establish'd Means there are *less Edifying*?

Answ. Yes; for the Means were less Edifying in the *Assemblies* at *Corinth*. Many spoke *confusedly at once*, which was not *a doing Things to edifying*, 1 Cor. 14. 26, 27. And many *spoke in strange Tongues*, which could not Edifie their Hearers, because they did *not understand them*, v. 16, 17. But under this lesEdifying State, it was not lawful to divide. *Whilst there are Divisions among you, are you not Carnal*, 1 Cor. 3. 3. All Christians must seek to Edifie the Church, as well as themselves; and the Church is Edified by Unity and Peace. *Follow after the things, which make for Peace, for with them we must Edifie one another*, Rom. 14. 19.

Quest. I see there is a just Cause of Separation, when a Church *imposes* any Sins, or Errors as Conditions of her Communion. But what if a Church, that is Defiled with these, is yet so Moderate, as *not to impose* them; may she not, for all that, be so far corrupted with them, that on account thereof all Good Men, who would take due care

of their own Souls, ought to leave her Communion?

Answ. Yes, if she errs so foully in *Faith*, as to overthrow, or go off from the *Foundation*. Or, if her Corruptions have so overspread, and poison'd all the necessary Parts of her *Worship*, that there is no joyning in her Prayers and Sacraments, without joyning in the Corruptions too, that are Embodied with them. In these cases, *be ye Separate*, saith the Scripture, *and touch not the unclean thing*, 2 Cor. 6. 17. and *come out of her, my People, that ye be not Partakers of her Sins, and that ye receive not of her Plagues.* Rev. 18. 4.

Quest. One Case, you say, is in *Errors of Faith*, which *overthrow the Foundation*. What mean you by the *Foundation of Faith*?

Answ. Such points of it, as are the very *Bottom* and *Ground-work of the Christian Covenant*, whereinto we are all Baptized, and whereon the Church is Erected. They are such Articles, as are the Root of all that Worship, and Obedience, we are to pay to *God*; of all that Submission, Trust, and Adoration, we are to shew towards *Jesus Christ*; and of all that Labour, and Success, we are call'd to here in the Prosecution of an *Holy Life*. All the Points of our Christian Faith, are a-like *True*: but all Truths, are not a-like *useful*; nor all useful Truths, a-like *necessary*. 'Tis necessary for us to believe all, when we are sufficiently shew'd that Christ has taught them. But 'tis moreover

over neceſſary for us all to ſee he has taught ſome, which are not only to be Believed, becauſe they were Revealed; but were therefore Revealed, becauſe neceſſary to be Learned, and Believed, of all that retain to him. And theſe Points, which are not only Profitable, but neceſſary to the Worſhip and Service of God by *Jeſus Chriſt*, and to the maintenance of the Chriſtian Covenant, and of the Church which is Built upon it, are called *Fundamentals*.

Queſt. Can you ſhew me, what points are ſuch?

Anſw. One is the common foundation of all true Religion, *Moſaical*, and *Natural*, as well as *Chriſtian*; and that is, *the Belief of the one True God*, not only of his *Being*, but alſo of his *Providence* and Care to Reward thoſe that ſeek him. Thus St. *Paul* ſets down *Faith towards God*, as one Article to be *firſt laid*, Heb. 6. 1. *For he that comes to God* in any way, ſaith he, *muſt believe that he is*; *and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him*, Heb. 11. 6. This *Faith in the one true God*, is overthrown, not only when Men overlook, or deny him; but alſo when they joyn, any *Gentile* Gods, who were Apoſtate Spirits, in Copartnerſhip with him. For every true Church, muſt have *Repentance* from Idols *towards God*, as well as *Faith towards our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, Act 20. 20, 21. And *this is Life eternal*, ſays our Saviour, *to know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent*, Joh. 17. 3. And *he is Anti-*

christ, saith St. *John*, *that denies the Father and the Son*, 1 Joh. 2. 22. If she cast off the *Belief of the one true God*, the common Principle of all true Religion, she is the Congregation of some Faln Spirits, which set up for false Gods, and not the Church of the Great God of Heaven. As well, as if she have not *Faith in Christ*, she is no longer Christian.

Quest. But when a Church professes Faith in the one true God, the common Groundwork of all true Religion: What is the Particular Foundation of the *Christian Religion*?

Answ. Belief of *Jesus being the Son of God, and the Christ*, and *of Salvation by his Merits and Mediation.* When *Peter confessed Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of the living God*, our Saviour said, *upon this Rock will I build my Church*, Mat. 16. 16, 18. And St. *Paul* says, *the Foundation which he had laid, and other than which no Man can lay, is Jesus Christ*, 1 Cor. 3. 11. And the compass of *saving Knowledge*, marked out by our Lord himself, as I noted, is, together with the *Knowledge of the one true God, to know Jesus Christ whom he has sent.* Whilst any Church retains this *Faith in Christ*, it is Christian, and has Right to *Baptism*, as St. *Philip* declar'd to the *Eunuch*, who was *Baptized* upon his making this Confession, *Act.* 8. 37, 38. But if it denys this Authority of *Christ*, and its dependance upon him, for salvation; it is thereby unchurched, and

and becomes unchriſtian, like *Jewiſh*, *Mahometane*, or *Heathen* Churches, and is put out of the ordinary way of Salvation, there *being no Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we may be ſaved, but his alone*, Act. 4. 12.

Queſt. But doth not this Grand *Article* of *Jeſus being the Chriſt and Saviour*, imply in it ſundry other *Articles*?

Anſw. Yes; if we Believe *Jeſus to be the Chriſt*, we muſt believe all the *Holy Scriptures* as his Word, and they contain all Articles. But it more eſpecially implies his *Incarnation*, *Paſſion*, *Reſurrection*, and other great Articles of the *Creed*, which muſt be expreſly owned by every one that rightly underſtands it. And accordingly, in the various Repetitions of this *Grand Article*, and Repreſentations of the *ſaving Faith*, one or other of theſe, is oft-times added, and given as the inſtance of it. * *Believing Jeſus to be the Chriſt, the Son of God, you may have Life through his Name*, ſaith St. *John*, ſhewing the neceſſity of this main Foundation, *Joh.* 20. 31. But St. *Paul*, ſpeaking of this Grand Doctrine, ſays, *I determined to know nothing among you, but Jeſus Chriſt and him Crucified*; ſetting out the knowledge of *Chriſt*, in the knowledge of his Paſſion, 1 *Cor.* 2. 2. And, *if thou confeſs the Lord Jeſus, and believe God raiſed him from the Dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved*; exemplifying the ſaving knowledge of *Jeſus*, in the Belief of his Reſurrection, *Rom.* 10. 9. And when he commanded us to preach him, ſaith

* 1 *Joh.* 4. 15. *&* 5. 1.

St. *Peter*, *he commanded us to preach, and teſtifie, that it is he, who is ordained of God, to be the Judge both of quick and dead*; illuſtrating the Preaching *Chriſt*, by preaching the Judgment to come, *Act.* 10. 42. *Every Spirit that confeſſeth Jeſus Chriſt is come in the Fleſh, is of God*: *And every Spirit that confeſſes it not, is Antichriſt, and not of God*, ſaith St. *John*; explaining the Confeſſion of Jeſus Chriſt, by the Confeſſion of his Incarnation, 1 *Joh.* 4. 2, 3. And ſpeaking of the *Record*, or Witneſs, God had given to the Chriſtian Doctrine, he thus declares the matter atteſted by him, *This is the Record, God hath given us Eternal Life, and this Life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath Life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not Life*: Setting off the Chriſtian Religion, and the Saving Faith, by the Belief of the Life everlaſting, 1 *Joh.* 5. 10, 11, 12. And as for the Belief of the *Holy Ghoſt*, the neceſſity of that, and of our Dependance on him, to make any man a *Chriſtian*, our Saviour has ſufficiently expreſſed, by ordering our very *Baptiſm*, which initiates us into Chriſtianity, to be *into his Name*, *Mat.* 28. 19. All theſe Points, are the very Ground and Foundation, of our Subjection to the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, (the Parties we contract withal in the *Chriſtian Covenant*,) of all our Adoration, Truſt, and Submiſſion, to the Bleſſed *Jeſus*; of our worſhipping, and ſerving God by him; and of all that Holi-

Holineſs of Life, which muſt gain us the Divine Acceptance; on all which Accounts, they are neceſſary and Ground-work Articles of Chriſtian Faith, and properly call'd *Fundamentals.*

Queſt. By this it may ſeem, as if the Believing *Jeſus to be the Chriſt*, were in more explicit words, to believe the *Apoſtles Creed*, ſince that ſets forth all the Forecited *Articles.* But doth it contain all Points of meer Belief, that are neceſſary and *Fundamental*?

Anſw. Yes. For it was made for a Badge of true Chriſtians; and thereupon, we may conclude, was deſign'd to be no ways Defective, in any neceſſary Articles of Chriſtianity. It has ever been the Form of Faith at *Baptiſm*, and was all which not only the Ignorant, but even the moſt Learned then profeſſed: So that it is ſufficient to make any Perſon a Diſciple and Member of *Jeſus Chriſt.* It was held, and Styled, as is well known, by the *Ancient Fathers*, as the *Canon*, the *Sum*, the *Perfect Sum of Faith*; *that Token, which was ſufficient to ſhew who preached Chriſt according to the Doctrine of the Apoſtles, and to diſtinguiſh Believers from Infidels*; that *wherein the Church Educated, and Catechized her Children*; and, in ſum, which paſſed as the Teſt of common Chriſtianity among them. Laſtly, ſince the Compilers of it, ſhort as it is, gave room to ſome things only Circumſtantial, as the *Judge* under whom *Chriſt* ſuffer'd, and the

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Time of his Riſing from the Dead: 'Tis not to be thought they would omit any thing eſſential, and of the Body of the Faith, which was neceſſary to be inſerted.

Queſt. Whilſt any Church then profeſſes this *Creed*, which is the Foundation, doth it continue a *Chriſtian Church*, tho' it tacks thereto many groſs Errors, and, as St. *Paul* ſays, *builds Wood, Hay, and Stubble thereupon*? 1 Cor. 3. 12.

Anſw. Yes; for they, who profeſs this, may be Baptized, as I ſaid; and *Baptiſm* admits men into the Church, and makes them Chriſtians. And ſome Churches, in the *Apoſtles* days, had imbibed ſundry great Errors. But retaining ſtill their *Faith in Chriſt*, they were owned, notwithſtanding, as *Churches of Chriſt*, and ſtyled and treated ſo, in the *Apoſtolical* Epiſtles to them. And tho' it be a moſt ſad thing, to conſider of the preſent diviſions of *Chriſtendom*: yet, God be thanked, this *Creed*, which is the full foundation of Faith, is ſtill unanimouſly own'd, and profeſs'd, by all Churches, which make any conſiderable Figure and large ſpread, or have attain'd at this day to become National in the Chriſtian World. On account whereof, how wide ſoever their differences, or great the errors, of many of them are in ſuperſtructures, we muſt ſtill look upon them as *Churches of Chriſt*; tho' ſome, alas! are very degenerate and corrupt ones.

Queſt. And may they be ſaved too?

Anſw.

Answ. Yes: if they have nothing else to hinder their Salvation, but such Errors, and under them they sincerely fear God, and work Righteousness. For *Christ is the Saviour of the Body*: so that retaining so much truth as may qualifie them to be of the Church, and receive Baptism; they have so much, as is indispensably requisite to Salvation. But, that they are saved notwithstanding their great Errors, which imply unbelief of some weighty and concerning Truths our Lord has revealed to us, is on the score of their well meant and pityable ignorance, or of their unmasterable Prejudices and Prepossessions. Whilst men hold the Foundation, and err only in superstructures: tho' their corrupt superstructures, *their Hay, and Stubble, which they Build thereupon*, as St. *Paul says, shall be burnt, and suffer loss*; yet, for the Foundations sake, if they do not hold the errors thro' an evil mind, nor are obstinate in them against convictive evidence, *the Persons themselves may be saved*, who were such unskilful Builders, 1 *Cor.* 3. 15.

Quest. Are not such erroneous Christians or Churches then, in as good a state, as more sound and *Orthodox* ones?

Answ. No; they are neither so sure of having any Reward, nor, if that falls right, like to receive so much of it. For their errors make their passage at the *Day of Judgment* to the side of the Blessed more *hazardous*; errors being punishable in some,

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as well as pardonable in others, according as they have more or leſs of *willfulneſs*. And if finally they do not hinder it, they will at leaſt render it more *difficult*, and *painful* to them; as the *Apoſtle* intimates, in comparing mens eſcape from among ſuch errors, to ones eſcaping out of a Houſe *all on Fire* about him. Yea, I add, as with much pain and trouble, ſo with much *harm* and *loſs* too. For their ſuperſtructed Works at that day, ſuffering loſs, inſtead of receiving recompence, their reward for the Foundations ſake, which they ſtill hold, will be leſs than the reward of other Chriſtians, who not only hold to it, but alſo build thereon rewardable ſuperſtructures, void of their Corruptions. This the Apoſtle ſets off by † *Fire*, which, when it tryes ſolid Works, like as when it proves *Gold*, or *Silver*, doth no harm, but only makes them finer. But when it meets with corrupt ones, like as when it ſeizes *Hay*, or *Stubble*, it feeds upon, and conſumes them, as combuſtible Matter. *If a mans work*, ſays he, *abide the Fire*, which tryes all Works at that Day, *he ſhall receive a reward* for it. *But if any Man's Work be burnt, he ſhall ſuffer loſs, yet he ſhall be ſaved, but ſo as by Fire*;

† Not the *Purgatory* Fire of the Church of *Rome*, which is only for Sinners, whoſe Sins, not fully purged before, are to be purged there, either by the *Fire* it ſelf, or by the *Application of others merits*, in *Indulgences*, or by the help of *Maſſes*, *Prayers*, or *Alms* done for them, by their Friends on Earth. And all this, *before the Day of judgement*; they themſelves, after that is once paſs'd, owning only Eternal Puniſhments. Whereas, the *Fire* here ſpoken of, beſides its liableneſs to *metaphorical* interpretations, if it be *litteral*, is *at the Day of judgment*. *The Day*,

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Fire; *i. e.* ſnatch'd out of the midſt of thoſe ſuperſtructures, as are ſet all on Fire, like a man reſcued out of a Houſe on Fire, where he lay encompaſſed with the Flames: which is a way of eſcape full of dammage, as well as difficulty and danger, 1 *Cor.* 3. 13, 14, 15. So that the reward of the pityable miſled, is neither ſo conſiderable, nor ſo ſecure, as that of the Orthodox and well directed.

Queſt. And whilſt a *Church* holds to this Foundation of Faith, are we not to forſake her, meerly for her building many groſs Errors thereupon, if ſhe doth not impoſe them?

Anſw. No; for under ſuch Errors, as I have ſhewn, it ſtill remains a *Chriſtian Church*: and among all true Chriſtians, there ſhould be the *Communion of Saints*, *i. e.* a readineſs to joyn mutually in the Worſhip, and Offices of our common Chriſtianity. Requiring no unlawful terms of Communion, we may unite with her without ſin; and then if we ſeparate, it is without juſt cauſe; and it is always blame-worthy, to ſeparate cauſeleſly from any Church. And thus the *Apoſtles* taught the Chriſtians to practiſe, in their Days.

viz. That great ſignal Day, which *tryes* and *manifeſts all Actions*, and which *ſhall be revealed by Fire* (the proper Character and Deſcription of the *Day of Judgement* in Scripture, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 7, 8.) *ſhall declare it*, v. 13. as ſeveral of the *Fathers* talk of a *Purging Fire*, *viz.* The great *Fire* at the end of the World; which they fancy'd might prove all things elſe, when it refines the Earth, and Heavens. And this *Fire* is further ſaid, to be for the Tryal of *every Man*, and of *every Work*, *Gold* and *Silver*, as well as *Wood*, and *Stubble*: not only for the puniſhment of evil Works, and unpurged evil Workers, as theirs is, v. 12, 13, 14, 15.

Days. For many great Errors had then crept into the Churches. Some, indeed, ſtruck at the very *Foundation*, as that of *denying Jeſus Chriſt to be come in the Fleſh*, a Point, the *Profeſſion* whereof is neceſſary, to our *having both the Father and the Son*; and accordingly the *denyal of it*, is given as a ſure mark of an *Antichriſt* by St. *John*, and all Chriſtians warn'd not to have *any Communion*, or *Society with him*, 2 Joh. 7, 9, 10, 11. Such alſo was the error of thoſe at *Corinth*, who *deny'd the Reſurrection*, 1 Cor. 15. 12. and that of the moſt rigorous ſort of *Judaizers*, who ſet up, not only the neceſſity of the *Law of Moſes*, but its ſufficiency without any need of *Chriſts Sacrifice*, ſo caſting off all *dependance on his Blood for Salvation*. Both which the *Apoſtle* loads with ſuch heavy conſequences, † telling the *Judaizers* they were *faln from grace*, and *Chriſt would profit them nothing*, or be *of none effect to them*; and the * *Denyers of the Reſurrection*, that *then is Chriſt not riſen, they are yet in their Sins, their Faith is vain*, and ſo *is the Apoſtles Preaching, &c.* as give us cauſe to think, had they prevailed, and become the common Profeſſion in thoſe Churches, they would have rendred them Chriſtians meerly in Name, but in Truth would have unchurched them. But other Churches, that kept true to the Foundation, did in thoſe days build many great errors thereupon. At *Corinth*, they *built Wood, Hay, and Stubble upon the Foundation*; and fell to hold not

† *Gal* 5.2, 4. *& Ch.* 1. 6, 7.

* 1 *Cor.* 15.13, 14, 16, 17, 18. *&c.*

1 *Cor.* 3. 12.

not only ſpeculative Errors, but ſome very dangerous Tenets in practice: ſuch as the † lawfulneſs of *inceſtuous Marriages*, eſteemed, as may ſeem, as a thing indifferent, even by the *Paſtors* themſelves; and of * *Communicating in Idol-Feaſts*, wherein they thought they did not ſin, ſo long as they believed *an* † *Idol is nothing*. At *Colos*, they were prone to ſuperſtition, to place Religion in uncommanded Abſtinencies, ſuch as *touch not*, *taſte not*, *handle not*, which were *the Doctrines* and Devices *of men*, Col. 2. 20, 21, 22. At *Epheſus* St. *Paul* foretold, that *ſeveral would ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe Things*, Act. 20. 30. And at *Rome*, and abundance of Churches in the *Provinces* where the *Jews* had *Synagogues*; beſides thoſe rigid *Judaizers*, who deny'd the *Redemption by Chriſt*, and *merit of his Sacrifice*; there were others, who believed theſe, but yet maintain'd together with them the neceſſity of the *Moſaick* Rites, obſerving the *Jewiſh difference of Meats and Days*, and *teaching the Gentiles to live as do the Jews*, Ro. 14. 2, 5. & Gal. 2. 14. But amidſt all theſe errors, which were held, ſometimes by Parties and Factions, and ſometimes by the greateſt numbers in the Churches, the *Apoſtles* preach'd to them, to own the erroneous as Brethren, whom, upon the account of thoſe great Truths they held, *God had received*, Rom. 14. 3. to beware of *Schiſms*, and *Diviſions*, as things that ſhew'd *Carnal* Profeſſors, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3. and to *keep the*

† 1 *Cor.* 5.

* 1 *Cor.* 8.

† *v.* 4. & *Ch.* 10. 19.

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Bond of Peace, Eph. 4. 3. And upon these Christian Grounds, and in correspondence to these *Apostolical* Ordinances, it is, that the *Protestants* of the opposite *Confessions*, are ready to Communicate with the *Lutherans*, notwithstanding their Errors of *Ubiquity* and *Consubstantiation*. And that the Champions of our own Church, have sundry times declared their readiness to Communicate, even with the Church of *Rome*, in any truly Christian thing, notwithstanding the Errors that Church has added to the Foundation: But that they have barr'd us all out, by imposing their Errors, and so staining and polluting their Worship, that with a good Conscience we cannot joyn with them. And accordingly, whilst they were free to come, and till the Pope forbid them; the *Romanists* were † for many years admitted to our Publick Service, and Sacraments, notwithstanding their different apprehensions, in the first part of *Queen Elizabeth's* Reign.

† Cambd. *Eliz. ad An.* 1570.

Quest. I suppose you speak this, of our uniting with them, only whilst their Errors are meer Errors of Faith, and consist in Opinion?

Answ. Yes; for 'tis not so, when they found any corrupt *Worship* thereupon. But if, together with such unfundamental Errors, they have a faultless Worship, which they call us to joyn in; we must not separate for their Errors, whilst they keep them to themselves, and we are under no necessity of

of ſharing in them. And that we never are, whilſt they do not impoſe them, but leave us at liberty, either to diſſent, where their errors are in little Matters; or to gainſay and confute them, where they are of more importance to Religion, and mens Souls.

Queſt. I think I ſee, when a Church errs ſo foully in *Faith*, that we ought to forſake her. But another ground of withdrawing our Communion, you ſaid, is *Corruption of Worſhip*. And when is a Church ſo far corrupted in her Worſhip, that we ought not to joyn in it?

Anſw. That may be, either in caſe of *intrinſick impediments*, in the matter of her Offices. Or, when good Prayers and Devotions are put up to God, but in an *unknown Language*.

Queſt. When is ſhe ſo far corrupted, in the very *matter of her Worſhip*, and Publick Services?

Anſw. When ſhe falls off, either from Worſhipping the one true God; or by one Mediator, *Jeſus Chriſt*; or mixes Sin in all her Prayers, whereby Grace and Mercy are to be ſought; or in her Sacraments of *Baptiſm*, or the *Lords Supper*, wherein that Grace and Mercy are ſealed and convey'd. We cannot live Religiouſly, without Prayers; nor pray to any but the true God, except we pray like *Idolatrous Heathens*; nor Pray to him by any other, but by *Jeſus Chriſt*; the defective Prayers of Sinners needing to be expiated, as was † obſerved, *Chap.* 3.

before they are preferr'd, and not being acceptable from any other hands; nor claim the benefit of his intercession for our Prayers, 'till we are Baptized, and made Members of his Church; nor shew our selves worthy of such a Saviour, and assure, as much as may be, the Blessings we pray for, without partaking of the Lords Supper. So that if any Church has embody'd Sin into her Service in these particulars, we cannot perform the necessary parts, and vital acts of Worship in her Communion, with a good Conscience.

Quest. So that if the Publick Offices of any Church, direct their Prayers and Adorations, not only to God, but also to Creatures, either Rational Beings, or senseless Images; or if they prefer not these Prayers to God, by *Jesus Christ* alone, but make use of other Mediators, as *Departed Saints*, or *Angels*; or if they pollute their Baptism, and the Lords Supper, by unlawful mixtures; the twisting of these Corruptions into her Worship, without any further Imposition, is enough to bar all good People from joyning with her in these Offices?

Answ. Yes; For as we must be careful, publickly to Worship and serve God; so must we be as careful, not to offer up any sinful and forbidden Thing in service to him, which is not to honour and please, but affront and provoke him. So that when any particular Office, is thus tainted in any Church, we must separate from that, although

though at the ſame time, whilſt that will be allowed, we be ready to joyn in others. When 'tis generally corrupt, and ſound and unſound lye intermixt thro all their ſervice, we muſt ſeparate from them in all Offices.

Queſt. But what if the Devotions themſelves are good, and directed only unto God by *Jeſus Chriſt*, but in a *ſtrange Language*, which we do not underſtand. Were it enough to deſert a Churches ſervice for that reaſon?

Anſw. Yes; becauſe God will *have Prayers with the underſtanding*, 1 Cor. 14, 15, 16. and *God being a Spirit*, receives ſuch only, as *Chriſt* notes, *who Worſhip him in Spirit*, which a man doth not, whoſe Spirit is idle, and underſtands not what he ſays to God, *John* 4. 23, 24. So that if any Church locks up her Publick Prayers and Offices in an unknown Tongue, good People muſt ſeek out another, where they may offer up the ſame Services, in a Language their Spirits can joyn in, and Worſhip, as the *Scripture* requires, *to Edification*, 1 Cor. 14. 26. We muſt not ſeparate, as I ſaid, from a ſound Church, only becauſe it ſeems leſs edifying. But we muſt ſeparate, when there is no Devotion, but what is directly contrary to Edification.

Queſt. If we may not ſeparate, where there are ſuch real Faults in a Church; then much leſs for the diſlike of *received Cuſtoms, Rites and Uſages*, when confeſſedly, as you ſaid, in indifferent matters?

Anſw. Moſt certainly. To rend the Body, and make diſturbance for light things, ſhews an ill Member in all Societies. Not to *yield* to an *innocent Cuſtom*, as I noted before from St. *Paul*, ſhews a man to be no lover of peace, but a *lover of contention*, 1 *Cor.* 11.16. Nay, if any man would ſhew himſelf a Catholick Chriſtian, he muſt not only readily comply with the indifferent Rites and Uſages of his own Church, which has Authority over him: but, as he has occaſion to paſs by them, or converſe among them, with the Uſages of other Churches, or Chriſtians, tho' very different from his own, ſo long as there is no ſin in them. a Catholick Chriſtian, muſt have a Catholick Spirit, and be ready to ſhew he owns all other Chriſtians, 'till they are regularly caſt out of *Chriſt*'s Church, for Brethren and fellow-members: and never ſtick out from exerciſing with them the common Chriſtianity, whereby all Chriſtians ſerve and honour *Chriſt*, by reaſon of the particular Rites in any Church or Place, which are no offence to him.

Queſt. If we may not lawfully ſeparate from a Church, whoſe Conſtitution has ſome Faults, yea ſome great ones, as were among the Churches in the *Apoſtles* times: I ſuppoſe we may much leſs ſeparate, when the Church it ſelf in its conſtitution is faultleſs, meerly for the *ill* and *ſcandalous Lives* of its *Members*.

Anſw. Moſt certainly. And accordingly St.

St. *Paul* is moſt ſevere againſt the Schiſms at *Corinth*: tho' in the ſame Church, he complains of the horrible prophaneneſs of many among them, who *came drunk to the Lords Supper*, 1 Cor. 11. 21. and *of the Wraths, Envyings, Strifes, Back-bitings, Swellings, Tumults, unrepented Uncleanneſs, Laciviouſneſs, and Fornication*; for which *he feared God would humble him, when he came among them*, 2 Cor. 12. 20, 21. The *Church* of God in all times, under the *Ancient Patriarchs*, and afterwards in the Nation of the *Jews*, was a mixt Society of good and bad livers. And in Chriſtianity it is compared to a † *Net*, that *catches Fiſh of every kind*; and to a * *Field*, ſown with *Tares*, as well as *Wheat*, and wherein *both muſt grow together, till the* Great and General *Harveſt*. 'Tis always its misfortune here, together with ſome true Saints, to have ſome Hypocritical Profeſſors. So that were we to ſeparate from a good Church for this Cauſe, we muſt ſeparate from all Churches, and could hold Communion with no Church on Earth. And therefore men muſt never think of leaving a good Church, becauſe it happens to have ſome corrupt People, or ſcandalous Miniſters. From the Sins we muſt ſeparate, which give the ſcandal, but unite, and adhere to the Church, which condemns them: the good muſt not deſert it, becauſe the bad will not obey, and be ruled by it.

† *Mat.* 13. 47.
* ver. 24, 25, 30.

Queſt. But what if it doth not uſe the *Rod of Diſcipline* to correct them?

Anſw. We are not to ſeparate notwithſtanding, as the *Apoſtles* told the Churches, where the Sins were too ſtrong, And the Sinners too numerous for Diſcipline, or the *Paſtors* too remiſs in uſing it. Thus the *Paſtors* were at *Corinth*, who, inſtead of *mourning over the inceſtuous Perſon, were rather puff'd up with him*, 1 Cor. 5. 2. And yet for all this, St. *Paul* would not hear, to hear of any tendencies towards *Schiſm* among them, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3. Thus alſo it was at *Pergamus*, where ſeveral were infected, with the ſcandalous *Doctrines* of the *Nicolaitans*, Rev. 2. 15. and at *Thyatira*, where the followers of *Jezabel* the *Falſe Prophetess*, were *ſuffer'd to go on* in their Spiritual *Fornication*, and *Sacrificing to Idols*, v. 20. And in other *Churches*, which either out of neceſſity, or neglect, relaxed the reins of *Diſcipline*, and tolerated ſcandalous Perſons, in the *Apoſtles* own times. But yet no plea for ſeparation, would ever be admitted by them on this pretence. In theſe caſes, the Church muſt anſwer, for the neglect of its power; and ſcandalous Sinners, for the ſcandals they give; but as for any private Chriſtians, whilſt they neither help on their ſcandals, nor imitate them, their Conſciences are not defiled with them. Beſides, the growth of *Schiſm*, has been one of the greateſt weakners of *Diſcipline*, one Congregation admitting and harbouring men, when another

ther rejects them. And therefore, to pretend want of Discipline for separation, is not only a most dis-ingenuous thing, but the way to bring Discipline, which they complain of as too little already, to be none at all.

Quest. By what you have discourſed on this Point, I perceive we are never Guilty of *Schiſm*, in ſeparating from any Church, when we have juſt cauſe. But that all breaking off, from any Part of *Chriſt*'s Body, is *Schiſmatical*, which is Cauſeleſs.

Anſw. Yes. And ſo is all *Driving* others into Separation, by *impoſing ſinful Terms*, as the *Condition of their Communion*. And then, which is the laſt thing I ſhall note concerning it, Schiſm from any Churches is moſt compleat, when we do not only ſeparate from their Religious Aſſemblies and Divine Offices, but withal, deny them to be Members of Chriſt's Body, or Parts of the Catholick Church. This is the Higheſt ſtep in Separation, and leaves not the leaſt Ground for Church-Communion. For 'tis only the *Members of Chriſt*'s *Body*, that muſt Communicate under him their Head, in the *proper Offices of Chriſtianity*; and the *Communion of Saints* profeſs'd in the Creed, is only within the compaſs of the *Catholick Church*. So that if we cut off any Societies, from being Members of *Chriſt*, and a *true Church*, we muſt have no more Communion with them, than if they were profeſt *Heathens*. And this was the Sacrilegi-

ous Breach of the *Donatists*, and *Novatians*; the Consummation of whose *Schism*, was their confining the Catholick Church to their own Party, and allowing no Church, no Sacraments, or Promise of Salvation, but among themselves.

Quest. There remains yet one instance, of the Communion of the *Primitive* Christians mentioned by St. *Luke*, viz. *Continuing in the Apostles Fellowship*, Act. 2. 42. I pray you what is meant by that?

Answ. Owning their Authority, and *continuing under their Government*. They were appointed by *Christ*, as his *Deputies*, to Govern his Church; and therefore adhering to them, as the Delegates of *Christ*, is call'd *living in their Fellowship*.

Quest. But how can we live in their Fellowship, and adhere to their Government, now they are dead?

Answ. By adhering to, and owning the Authority of our *own Bishops*, who are their *Successors*, and rule the Church in their stead. *Christ* told the *Apostles*, *he would be Present with them, to the end of the World*, Mat. 28. 20. Being present with their Successors, he calls being Present with them. And in like sort, keeping Fellowship with our Lawful Bishops, who are their Successors, is keeping Fellowship with them. *He that one sends*, saith the *Jews*, *is as himself*. And accordingly, when *Christ* had sent out his *Apostles*, he tells them, *he that receiveth you, receiveth me*, Mat. 10. 40. and *he that receives whom-*

whomsoever I send, receiveth me, Joh. 13. 20. And the *Apostle* commends the *Galatians*, that *that they received him, not only as an Angel of God, but as Christ Jesus*, Gal. 4. 14. And St. *Ignatius*, that Blessed *Martyr*, and contemporary of the *Apostles*, applauds the *Trallians*, that *they were subject to their Bishop, as to Jesus Christ, and to the Presbytery, as to the Apostles.* In *Scripture* Account, and Legal estimate, that is done to any Persons, which is done to their Substitutes and Representatives. And thus keeping Fellowship and Subjection, to the Bishops of the Church in all Ages, who were at first sent and commissioned by the *Apostles*, and empowered to send and ordain others at all times, is holding Fellowship, and paying subjection to the *Apostles* themselves, and by them to *Christ Jesus*.

Quest. This then is one Part of the Communion of Saints, to live subject to our own *Bishops*, not suffering our selves to be drawn away by such as would seduce us, but adhering to them against all *Schismatical* Opposers?

Answ. Yes. *Obey them that have the Rule over you, and submit your selves*, Heb. 13. 17. And *mark those that cause Divisions, and avoid them*, Rom. 16. 17. Be their Pretences, and Appearance, what they will, if they lead us into *Schism*, and an unnecessary Rejecting of our Lawful Governours, God hath not sent, nor doth his Spirit go along with them. That cannot lead to Schism, *it is*

the

the Author of Peace, not of Confusion, 1 Cor. 14. 33. It will not put us upon a needless rejecting of our Spiritual Governours, since Adherance to them in the *Apostles* Days, as I noted before, was made a Test of discerning True Spirits from False ones. *We are of God, he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us: Hereby know we the Spirit of Truth, and the Spirit of Error*, 1 Joh. 4. 6.

Quest. But if a Man is careful to Believe, and Practise *Christ*'s own Laws and Doctrines; is not that enough to make him a good Christian, except he likewise submit to *Church-Rulers*, and peaceably conform to their innocent Constitutions, and Rules of *Discipline*?

Answ. No. For this is one of his Laws, *to obey those that have the Rule over us, and watch for our Souls, and to submit our selves*, Heb. 13. 17. He orders them to take care, that *all things* in his Worship, *be done decently, and to Edification*, 1 Cor. 14. 26, 40. And he requires us to obey, and submit to their ordering. A good Christian, is not only one that believes and professes the *Christian Religion*, but is also a Member of the *Christian Church*. And they cannot be good Church-members, who will not submit so far as conscionably they may, to Church-Governours, nor Communicate in Church-Offices.

Quest. I see the *Communion of Saints*, implies their Communion in Christian *Doctrine*,

ſtrine, *Worſhip*, and *Government*. But doth it not alſo imply *Communicating*, not only in Affections, but in all *Good Offices*, in *Alms* and *outward Things*?

Anſw. Yes; *to do Good, and to Communicate, forget not*, Heb. 13. 16. And the Receiving their charitable Contributions, St. *Paul* calls *taking upon him the Gift, and Fellowſhip* or Communion, *of Miniſtring to the Saints*, 2 Cor. 8. 4. In the extream diſtreſs of the *Jeruſalem Chriſtians* at *firſt*, this communication of Alms was wonderful: For *all that were Rich, ſold their Poſſeſſions*, and put them into a *Common Stock*, *to be diſtributed* by the *Apoſtles*, *as every one had need*, Act. 2. 44, 45. and c. 4. 33, 34. And in not her places, where they did not take this courſe, yet was Communicating, as in all good Offices, ſo particularly in outward Things with their poorer Brethren, the Profeſſion of all Chriſtians. Their Rule was, *as they had opportunity, to do Good unto all, but eſpecially to thoſe of the Houſhold of Faith*, Gal. 6. 10. And to do good to theſe more particularly, when they travelled about as Strangers, and fled from place to place, for the *Faith of Chriſt*: which is the *Charity* and *Hoſpitality* of the *Scriptures*, ſo much magnified.

* * *Rom.* 12. 13. 1 *Pet.* 4. 9. *Heb.* 13. 2.

Queſt. When any *Saints* then of Foreign Countries, are forced to fly, and come among us for *Chriſt*'s ſake, to entertain them in our Houſes, and communicate to them of our Subſtance, which is here profeſſed, is

is of Great Account with God?

Anſw. Yes, of high Account. For it is one of thoſe Good Deeds, which *Chriſt* will expreſly mention in our behalf at the laſt Judgment. *Come ye Bleſſed, inherit the Kingdom:* for *I was a Stranger, and ye took me in*, Mat. 25. 34, 35. And therefore St. *Paul*, when he tells us of *diſtributing to the neceſſities of Saints*, reminds us particularly, of being *given to Hoſpitality*, Rom. 12. 13.

CHAP. X.

Of the Forgiveneſs of Sins.

The Contents.

What Sin is. Of wilful ſins. Of ſins of Ignorance, Surreption, Paſſion. Forgiveneſs of ſin, is the Releaſe of its Puniſhment. When Eternal Puniſhments are remitted, Preſent and Temporal are often exacted. What is the Time of Relaxing theſe Puniſhments. Remiſſion of all ſins, but Blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt. And wilful Apoſtacy from Chriſtianity. Wilful ſins forgiven, when we Repent, and forgive others. Sins of Ignorance and inadvertence, upon our Charity to others. This forgiveneſs outwardly diſpenſed in Baptiſm. The Euchariſt. And Sacerdotal Abſolution. The Power of the Keys lies in Retaining as well as Abſolving, which ought

to beget a juſt dread of Excommunication. What is meant by our Forgiving ſins. What uſe we are to make of the Forgiveneſs of ſins.

Queſt. WHat is the *Tenth* Article of the *Creed?*

Anſw. I *Believe the Forgiveneſs of Sins.*

Queſt. What is Sin?

Anſw. The *Breach of a Commandment*, or a Tranſgreſſion of ſome Law of God, committing what his Law forbids, or omitting what it injoins us. *Sin is the Tranſgeſſion of the Law*, 1 Joh. 3. 4. And all the Laws of God, which we tranſgreſs in ſinning againſt him, are contain'd in Holy *Scripture.*

Queſt. Then we never offend God, nor ſhall ſuffer for any thing, but what the *Scripture* has forbid, and againſt which we can produce ſome Law out of it?

Anſw. No; for *Sin is not imputed, where there is no Law*, Rom. 5. 13. And it muſt always be *a Law that worketh Wrath*, i. e. makes us liable to ſuffer it, *For where there is no Law, there is no Tranſgreſſion*, Rom. 4. 15. *The ſtrength of ſin is the Law*, ſaith the *Apoſtle*, 1 Cor. 15. 56. and *the Law enter'd, e're ſin did abound*, Rom. 5. 20.

Queſt. To prove any thing Sinleſs and Lawful then, it is not neceſſary to produce a Law, or Example for it, ſince a Law commanding it, would render it not barely Lawful, but neceſſary; but it is enough, that

that there be no Law againſt it?

Anſw. Very right; for till a Law forbids a thing, there is no ſin in it.

Queſt. What is a *Wilful* Sin?

Anſw. A Sin *againſt Knowledge*, or, doing what we know to be diſpleaſing to God. And this, either, when we are aware of the Evil, at the Time we commit it; or ſhould have been ſo, but that we have accuſtomed our ſelves to it, which makes us ſin without obſerving that we do ſo.

Queſt. If a Man by cuſtom brings himſelf to Swear, or Lye, or the like, without thinking of it, his Sin you ſay ſay is wilful, for all he doth not bethink himſelf in committing it?

Anſw. No doubt of it; for he wilfully contracted this Cuſtom and Habit, which is ſo far from being an excuſe for his Sin, that it is one of the greateſt aggravations of it. The Habit of Sin, is called the *Law of ſin*, Rom. 7. 23. and *the Body of Death*, ver. 24.

Queſt. What if a man has ſuch a mind to a Sin, that he will not ſee it, but checks and ſtifles all Thoughts that would ariſe in his mind againſt it? Nay, perhaps endeavours to deceive himſelf, and come to a Perſuaſion, that there is no Fault, or, it may be, ſome Praiſe in it?

Anſw. He is a wilful Offender indeed, becauſe his own Will makes him ignorant, as it did the *Phariſees* and other *Jews*, who were *wilfully Blind*, Mat. 13. 15.

Queſt.

Queſt. When is a wilful Sin *againſt Conſcience*?

Anſw. When 'tis acted againſt the preſent checks of our own minds, and under Fears and Relentings.

Queſt. And when is a Sin againſt Conſcience, called *Deliberate*, which, I ſuppoſe, is a higher pitch of *Wilfulneſs*?

Anſw. When 'tis committed after Fears and Debates, and we conſider'd and diſputed with our ſelves for ſome time, whether to do it or no, before we ventur'd on it.

Queſt. What is a ſin of *Ignorance*?

Anſw. When we do an Evil thing, not knowing it to be a ſin, nor ſeeing its ſinfulneſs.

Queſt. Doth *Ignorance* excuſe any Offences?

Anſw. Yes, when men are not ignorant through culpable Neglects, nor blinded by wicked Luſts. For in this caſe 'tis ſaid, *Chriſt can have compaſſion on the Ignorant, and Erroneous*, Heb. 5. 2. But when they have no mind to ſee a Thing, nor care to find it out, that Ignorance is faulty, becauſe chargeable on their own wills.

Queſt. What ſay you, when their Judgments are reſolv'd on the wrong ſide, and they act under Erroneous Opinions? Are they not excuſable in any Actions, ſo long as they only *follow their Conſcience*?

Anſw. No; except their Conſcience Errs ſo pitiably, as to be reaſonably qualified for excuſe. The *Jews* followed their Conſciences,

ſciences, when *they crucified Chriſt*, Act. 3. 17. and 1 Cor. 2. 8. but yet God eſteemed them *wicked Murderers*, Act. 7. 52. *Paul verily thought*, that *he ought to Perſecute the Church*, Act. 26. 9. But in that he declares, he was *the greateſt of ſinners*, 1 Tim. 1. 13, 15. *The times are coming*, ſaith our Lord, *that they who kill you, will think therein they do God ſervice*, Joh. 16. 2. But yet God would take vengeance on them, for *the Blood* of theſe *Righteous* Perſons, Mat. 23. 35. 'Tis no ſufficient warranty in what a Man doth, that he follows his Conſcience, except he take care to have a right Conſcience, or when 'tis wrong, it err only through misfortunes, not out of a wilful Neglect, a wicked Luſt, or an unteachable Temper.

Queſt. What is a Sin of *inadvertence*?

Anſw. When in the general we know a thing to be a ſin, but are not free at the time of acting it, to conſider, and reflect upon its ſinfulneſs. This generally happens, becauſe we do the evil ſuddenly, e're we can bethink our ſelves, whence they are called ſins of *Surreption*, i. e. which ſteal upon us unawares, and ſins of *Surpriſe*. And thus it falls out, in the many ſudden envious, luſtful, repining, or otherwiſe ill thoughts, or Deſires; the beginnings of Anger, the raſh Words and Cenſures, Good People are Guilty of. All which, till they can come to obſerve them, if then they are careful to check and Repreſs them, are pitiable inadvertences and ſurpriſes, which, becauſe

becauſe we are all apt daily to fall into more or leſs, are call'd ſins of *Daily incurſion.*

Queſt. What think you of ſins of *Paſſion*, when either mens own Conſciences, or other Friendly Monitors, tell them they are doing ill, but they go on notwithſtanding, becauſe Paſſion is ſtrong, and Luſt, or Anger, hurries them away, being very high in them?

Anſw. Theſe are not perfectly wilful, becauſe, when their Paſſions are at ſuch height, their Wills are captivated, and have little Power over them for that time. But they are puniſhable, as wilful ſins are, becauſe it is Mens voluntary Fault, if they do not mortifie all ſuch inordinate Paſſion; and they that belong to *Chriſt*, muſt not ſuffer Paſſion to ariſe ſo high, that it can captivate and reign in them. *They that are Chriſt's, have Crucified the Fleſh, with the Affections*, or Paſſions, *and Luſts*, Gal. 5. 24.

Queſt. From what you have ſaid, I perceive what *Sin is*: but what is meant by the *Forgiveneſs* of it?

Anſw. A *Releaſe of the Puniſhment*, which is due to it. For then God forgives a ſin, when he acquits Men of the Puniſhment of it. And becauſe this is a paſſing over ſins, as if they had never been, and taking no notice of them: it is called *covering ſins*, and *not imputing them*, Rom. 4. 7, 8.

Queſt. What are the Puniſhments due to Sin?

Anſw. Death, and *Diſeaſes*, and all the

Miſeries of this World. But eſpecially the *Eternal Torments* of *Hell Fire* in the *next.*

Queſt. The Eternal Pains of Hell, muſt needs be acquitted, when a Sinner is pardon'd. For we can never think any ſin pardon'd, whilſt the Sinner is eternally ſuffering for it. But when the everlaſting Puniſhments of the other Life are releaſed, are all the Temporal Inflictions in this Life ſtruck off too?

Anſw. No, for *Death is the Wages of ſin*; Rom. 6.23. and that ſtill is all Mens Portion. And when Men by their ſins have greatly diſhonoured God, or given great Scandal unto others, to manifeſt the juſtice of his Providence, God oft-times here chaſtiſeth them by preſent Judgments, yea, even after they have Repented, and he has thereupon remitted to them all eternal Pains. Thus, when *Nathan* told Penitent *David*, that *God* ſeeing his Repentance, *had put away his ſin*, ſo that as to the laſt account, he would *be acquitted*: Yet, *becauſe* thereby *he had given occaſion to the Enemies of God to Blaſpheme*, he ſhould be puniſhed here, and *the Child ſhould die* for it, 2 *Sam.* 12. 13, 14. And at *Corinth*, ſeveral of thoſe who on the ſcore of their Repentance, *ſhould not be condemned with the Wicked World* at laſt: Yet, for their Scandalous Prophanations of the *Lords Supper*, were *ſickly, and weak, and fell aſleep* at preſent. 1 *Cor.* 11. 30, 32. And *the Man of God* from *Judah*, being pitiably ſeduced by a Diſſembling *Prophet*, without any thing

thing that appears of an Evil intent, and having firſt faithfully, and boldly declared God's Meſſage againſt *Jeroboam*'s *Altar*, we may reaſonably hope, was mercifully ſpared as to the other World. But yet here God met him by the way, and *devoured him by a Lion*, for yielding to a Seducer, *to eat Bread againſt the Word of the Lord*, 1 King. 13. And this ought mightily to reſtrain us all, from acting any great diſhonour to God, or crying Offences, for which God may judge us in our Perſons, Eſtates, or Families, in this World, when upon our true Repentance, he acquits us in the next. *Penitence* is not ſo good a Preſervative againſt the ſting of theſe, as *innocence* is. For ſuch Offences do always juſtly expoſe us to Temporal *Calamities*, and ſometimes make it neceſſary for us that we ſhould be ſeverely corrected in this World. Which conſideration ought to reſtrain all, that regard either their own, or their Families welfare in this World, from ever being guilty of them.

Queſt. When are theſe puniſhments relaxed, and what is the *time of Pardon?*

Anſw. The ſolemn, full, and irreverſible declaration of it, is at the *Day of judgement*. But before that, God pardons the ſins of good Men in this life, giving them a general pardon of all ſins in *Baptiſm*; and of all particular Failures afterwards, as they repent of them. So on *David*'s repentance, for the *matter of Uriah*, *Nathan*

than told him, *God had put away his Sin*, 2 Sam. 12. 13.

Queſt. Is this forgiveneſs in this World perfect, and irreverſible, ſo that when once any ſins are ſtruck off, they are never more placed to account?

Anſw. No; but limited, and ſuſpended on Terms, *viz.* mens *perſeverance in repentance*; for, if after their pardon they fall off, and relapſe into the ſame wickedneſs, they ſhall be unpardon'd all again, and ſtand accountable for all former Tranſgreſſions. *If the Righteous man turn from his Righteouſneſs, to iniquity*, ſaith God in *Ezekiel*, *all the Righteouſneſs he hath done, ſhall not be mention'd to him, but in his Sins that he hath ſinn'd, ſhall he dye*, Ezek. 18. 24. & 33. 12, 13. And when the *Debtor*, to whom his *Lord had pardon'd all his great Sums*, had render'd himſelf unworthy of that grace, by his mercileſs uſage of a *ſmall Debtor among his fellow Servants*, his incenſed Lord cancel'd the Pardon, and exacted all the diſpunged Accounts. And *ſo*, ſays *Chriſt*, *will my Heavenly Father do with you in like caſe*, Mat. 18. 24, 27, 30, 34, 35.

Queſt. Do we believe the forgiveneſs of all Sins?

Anſw. Yes; except the *Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, and *willful Apoſtacy* from the Faith of *Chriſt*, for which there is no forgiveneſs.

Queſt. I have ſeen already, that there is no Pardon for *Blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt*.

Ghoſt. But is there none alſo, for *willful Apoſtacy from Chriſtianity*?

Anſw. No; *for if we ſin willfully, i. e.* by willful Apoſtacy, *after we have received the knowledge of the Truth, there remains no more Sacrifice for Sin, i. e. Chriſt*'s Sacrifice is not deſigned to expiate ſuch offence, *Heb.* 10. 26.

Queſt. Is that *Sinning willfully, willful Apoſtacy* from Chriſtianity?

Anſw. Yes. For theſe Sinners, ſaith the *Apoſtle, tread under foot the Son of God, i. e.* affirm *Chriſt* to be ſtill in the Grave, not riſen from the Dead; *and count the blood of the Covenant*, or *Chriſt*'s Blood, *an unholy Thing, i. e.* as the Blood of a Malefactor, and ſay it was juſtly ſhed; *and do deſpite to the Spirit of Grace, i. e.* deſpite the Holy Ghoſt, which confirm'd Chriſtianity, and reject all his Miracles as *Satanical* deluſions, *v.* 29. So that theſe Sinners were plainly *Apoſtates*, who ceaſed to own, and had begun to accuſe *Chriſt*, as the *Jews* and *Heathens* did. And the ſame Apoſtacy St. *Paul* ſpeaks of in another place, when he tells us, *if Chriſtians fall away, i. e.* from their Chriſtianity, whereby *they Crucify to themſelves the Son of God afreſh*, or joyn in Condemning him with his Crucifiers, *it is impoſſible to renew them again unto repentance*, Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6.

Queſt. But all other Sins you ſay, we may believe, and truſt to have the pardon of?

Anſw. Yes; thro' the *merits of Chriſt*, and

the *mercy of God.* So *Chriſt* Commiſſions his *Apoſtles*, to *Preach Repentance, and Remiſſion of Sins, to all Nations*, Luk. 24. 47. And *if any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, and he is the Propitiation for our Sins*, 1 Joh. 2. 1, 2. And *all manner of Sin and Blaſphemy, ſhall be forgiven unto men, but that againſt the Holy Ghoſt, which ſhall never be forgiven*, Mat. 12. 31.

Queſt. You would have no Sinners then to deſpair of Mercy, or think their Sins greater, than *Chriſt*'s merits, or God's grace, and too big to be forgiven?

Anſw. No, by no means. For *Chriſt*, by his moſt precious death, has gain'd a full Pardon for the greateſt Sins, and ſends out his *Apoſtles* to Proclaim it to the greateſt Sinners. *David* was guilty of *Adultery*, and *Murder*; *Paul* was a cruel and *bloody Perſecutor*, and *Blaſphemer*; *Peter* was perjuriouſly falſe, and *denyed his Maſter*. But † all theſe were forgiven, and none need, or muſt deſpair, as if, when they Repent, God had not pardon enough in ſtore.

† 2 *Sam.* 12, 13. 1 *Tim.* 1. 13 16. *Mat.* 26. 70.

Queſt. Theſe, indeed, are inſtances of the greateſt ſins. But is there forgiveneſs for them, when they are committed with the moſt aggravating Circumſtances?

Anſw. Yes. For *David*'s Murder, and Adultery, was with much † *deliberation* and *contrivance*, and againſt ſo many ſtruglings and reluctances, that thereby he became almoſt quite * *hardned*, and of a ſeared Conſcience. And *Peter*'s denyal, was repeated

† 2 *Sam.* 11.

* *Pſ.* 51. 10, 11.

ſeveral

ſeveral times, and thoſe † conſiderably di- † *Luk.* 22.
ſtant, to allow ſpace enough for remorſe, 56,58,59.
and that too with falſe Oaths, and bitter imprecations. But both theſe obtain'd mercy, on their true repentance.

Queſt. You ſay on true *Repentance*. Is all this forgiveneſs then, upon ſome *Terms* and *Conditions*?

Anſw. Yes; for God's grants of grace are, as in conſideration of *Chriſts* Sacrifice, ſo alſo of our Faith and Repentance. And therefore neither to Infidels, nor impenitent Perſons.

Queſt. Upon what terms muſt we believe God will forgive us any *willful Sins*?

Anſw. When we *repent* of them, and *forgive others*.

Queſt. Will he not pardon them, 'till we repent and amend them?

Anſw. No; for to all the willful Sinners of the World, the *Apoſtles* were to *Preach Repentance, and Remiſſion of Sins*. And of theſe 'tis ſaid, *he that confeſſes, and forſakes his Sins, ſhall find mercy*, Prov. 28. 13.

Queſt. But when we have repented, and left theſe Sins, will he not forgive us ſtill, unleſs we *forgive others*, that have treſpaſs'd againſt us?

Anſw. No; there is no forgiveneſs, neither for impenitent, nor uncharitable Perſons. *For if ye forgive men their Treſpaſſes, your Heavenly Father will alſo forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their Treſpaſſes, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you,*

Mat. 6. 14, 15. And therefore when we pray for forgiveneſs, our Lord allows us to do it only upon theſe terms. *Forgive us our Treſpaſſes, as we forgive them that Treſpaſs againſt us.*

Queſt. What if we have *wronged* any Perſons? is it not enough towards forgiveneſs to do ſo no more?

Anſw. No, it is not; but withal, we muſt *make Reſtitution* and amends, for the wrong we have done already. *If thou bring thy Gift to the Altar, and there remembreſt thy Brother hath ought againſt thee; leave there thy Gift before the Altar, and go thy way, firſt be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come, and offer thy Gift*, Mat. 5. 23, 24.

Queſt. I ſee we muſt hope to have forgiveneſs of our Sins of *willfulneſs*, and alſo of our *Sins of Paſſion*, which you ſhew'd to be of like guilt with them, only upon our true Repentance, and amendment of them. But upon what terms, ſhall our ſlips of *ignorance*, and *inadvertence* be pardon'd, ſince they are never perfectly amended, but hang about us more or leſs, as long as we are in this World?

Anſw. Upon our *great Charity* to other men, eſpecially to their Souls, in endeavouring their Converſion, and Salvation. And therefore that St. *Peter* recommends above all other Virtues, and for this Reaſon. *Above all things, have fervent Charity among your ſelves, for Charity ſhall cover the multitude of Sins*, 1 Pet. 4. 8. And *if any of*

you

you err, and one convert him, let him know, that he, who converts a Sinner from the Error of his way, ſhall ſave a Soul from Death, and ſhall hide a Multitude of ſins, Jam. 5. 19, 20.

Queſt. For whoſe ſake doth Almighty God allow us all this Benefit of Forgiveneſs?

Anſw. For *Jeſus Chriſt*'s, who, as you have ſeen, dyed for our Sins, and gave his blood a Ranſom, to purchaſe for us all this Pardon of them. *He is ſet forth a propitiation for the remiſſion of Sins that are paſs'd, thro' Faith in his Blood*, Rom. 3. 25. And then for his ſake we ſhall receive all this mercy, when, with the diſpoſitions before expreſs'd, in his Name we devoutly pray to God for it.

Queſt. By the promiſes of the Goſpel, I ſee this forgiveneſs is aſſured to all Chriſtians, upon the terms you have deſcribed. But is it in any *Signs*, and *Tokens*, *outwardly diſpenſed* to them?

Anſw. Yes; both in the *Holy Sacraments*, and in *Sacerdotal Abſolution*. Which ways of miniſtring this forgiveneſs, as well as the forgiveneſs it ſelf, are noted in ſome Ancient Creeds: This Article being thus profeſs'd in St. † *Cyprian's* Form at *Baptiſm*, *I believe the Remiſſion of Sins by the Church*.

† *Ep. ad Januar. &c. & Ep. ad Magnum. Ep.* 69, 70. *Ed.* Oxon.

Queſt. Is this forgiveneſs diſpenſed to us in the Sacrament of *Baptiſm*?

Anſw. Yes; and that moſt amply, the water

water of *Baptiſm* waſhing off the ſtain of all former Sins. *Be Baptized, and waſh away thy Sins*, ſaid *Ananias* to *Saul*, Acts 22. 16. *Repent, and be Baptized for the Remiſſion of Sins*, ſaid St. *Peter* to the *Jews*, Acts 2.38. And *he hath ſaved us by the Laver of Regeneration*, *i. e.* the water of Baptiſm, *and the renewing of the Holy Ghoſt*, Tit. 3 5. So that whatever polluti-ons men had before upon them, if they come to *Baptiſm*, with true Faith and Repentance, they are thereby made clean again.

Queſt. Is it alſo diſpenſed in the Sacra-ment of the *Lords Supper?*

Anſw. Yes; if after the *Baptiſmal* cleanſing, they relapſe, and contract new guilt, in that they are admitted to renew the ſame Covenant of Grace again, and ſeal the Par-don of it. For therein *Chriſt* gives us *his own Blood, which*, as he ſays particularly, *was ſhed for the Remiſſion of Sins*, Mat. 26. 28. He entertains us there at his own Table, which is an open profeſſion to all worthy comers, that he is reconciled to them, and receives them again as Friends. And there-fore, when any Baptized Chriſtians are ſtartled, and terrified with the Conſcience of their Sins, let them repair to that Holy Sacrament, to ſeal, and aſſure the forgive-neſs of them. But let them come with Faith, and Repentance, and Reconciliation to their Bre-thren; which, as I ſaid, are the Terms of our being Forgiven. For the Holy Sacra-ments diſpenſe this forgiveneſs to none, but ſuch as worthily receive them, and thoſe

they

they do cleanſe from all former Pollutions.

Queſt. Is there alſo a diſpenſation of this Pardon, in *Prieſtly Abſolution*?

Anſw. Yes, for therein *Chriſt* has authoriz'd his *Miniſters*, that act in his place and ſtead, to pronounce the Sentence of Pardon upon all true Penitents, and bid them expect, that what they regularly thus declare on Earth, in his Soveraign Court in Heaven he will make good. *He breathed on them, and ſaid, receive ye the Holy Ghoſt. Whoſe ſoever Sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whoſe ſoever Sins ye retain, they are retained*, Joh. 20. 22, 23. And therefore when a true Penitent hears his Pardon ſolemnly pronounced, by an Officer, whom God has deputed and Commiſſion'd for it, he may quiet his heart, as one whoſe caſe is judged, and firmly hope God will pronounce the ſame at the laſt Judgment. But this, I ſay, he muſt do only after true Repentance. For 'tis only *the Miniſtry of Reconciliation*, ſaith St. *Paul*, which *God hath committed unto us*, 2 Cor. 5. 18. but the direction, and ratification of it, he has reſerved to himſelf; and then only ratifies what his Miniſters do, when they pronounce according to his own Rules and Orders. So that if the Prieſt pronounce by miſtake, and abſolve the impenitent, God will judge right, tho' he judge wrong, and Condemn at laſt, whom he had before erroneouſly abſolved in his Judgment.

Queſt. Chriſt ſays, *what they retain, ſhall be retained*; as well, as *what they remit, ſhall be*

be remitted. Ought not that to beget in all Chriſtians, a great dread of Excommunication, and Reverence for Church-Cenſures?

Anſw. Yes, queſtionleſs, when they proceed upon juſt Cauſe; for then *Chriſt* will maintain the Honour of his Deputies, and make good their ſentence. *He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that deſpiſeth you deſpiſeth me*, Luke 10. 16. If *any Offender will not hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen man, and a Publican*, Mat. 18. 17. In theſe Acts, what his Miniſters do Regularly, and according to his Direction, they do it as repreſenting him, by vertue of his Commiſſion and Authority, which, having given, to be ſure he will ſtand by. And accordingly St. *Paul*, and the *Church-Governours* at *Corinth* under him, exerciſing their Power by virtue of *Chriſt's* Commiſſion, Declares, that both in *binding*, and relaxing or *forgiving*, he acted *with the Power*, and *in the Perſon* or place *of Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5. and 2 Cor. 2. 10.

Queſt. Do all *Cenſures* of the Church then, where the Truth is on its ſide, cut men off, as from the Church, which is his Body, ſo from *Jeſus Chriſt*, who is the *Head* of it?

Anſw. All thoſe do, which are paſſed for ſuch ſins or errors, as are Damnable by the Tenor of *Chriſt's* own Laws. For then, they only ſpeak the Language of *Chriſt's* own Rules, and, as † *Tertullian* ſays, are a

† *Apolog.* c. 39.

true

true anticipation, or *Fore-hand Draught of the great Judgment*. And when his Officers only pronounce, and ſay after him; there is no doubt, but he will confirm what they have pronounced in his Name.

Queſt. But from what you have formerly diſcourſed, I perceive that ſome things in Religon, being againſt the Prime, and Fundamental Doctrines, are ſo Damnable in themſelves, as not to be capable of any Favour or Allowances. And that others, being only againſt inferior Truths, are Damnable only as accompanied with an Evil Mind, but capable withal of being incurred under Pardonable circumſtances. Now in theſe laſt Points, many Perſons, that mean well, and ſerve *Chriſt* ſincerely, in the main and eſſentials of a Chriſtian, may yet be unhappily miſlead into wrong Opinions, or Practices. And if for their fixedneſs, and obſtinacy in theſe, they happen to be caſt out of any Church; do you think they are always cut off from *Chriſt* too, and that he will Finally *Anathematiſe*, and condemn them in his Sentence?

Anſw. No. For the *Church*, as all humane Judges, being unable to ſee into Mens Hearts, give ſentence in theſe caſes, according to outward Actions. But *Chriſt* in his judgment of them, looks alſo at the mind and heart of the Actors: Rateing exactly, not only the Puniſhableneſs of the Offences; but alſo the Degrees of voluntary and involuntary, which makes a Pardonableneſs

or

or Puniſhableneſs of the Offenders. And making theſe Allowances on ſuch ſcores, as fall not under their Notice; 'tis reaſonable to believe, he will ſtill own and receive ſeveral compaſſionably miſlead, who are caſt out on theſe accounts by the *Churches Cenſures.*

Queſt. This validity and effect of Church-Cenſures, you ſay, is when they proceed according to *Chriſt's own Rules*, and upon *juſt cauſe.* But if they bind where the Goſpel ſays they ſhould looſe, and Excommunicate againſt Reaſon; I ſuppoſe thoſe Cenſures are meer Scare-crows, that may ſerve to make a ſhow, but bring no hurt with them?

Anſw. Very true. *Bleſſed are ye*, ſays our *Saviour*, *when Men ſhall ſeparate you from their Company, and* expunge or *caſt out your Name as evil, for the Son of Mans ſake: for ſo perſecuted their Fathers the Prophets. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy, for your Reward is great in Heaven*, Luk. 6. 22, 23. If good Chriſtians are *Excommunicated* in any Church, for not going againſt the *Scriptures*, and complying with it in ill things, as poor *Proteſtants* are by the *Romiſh* Church, they loſe nothing thereby with God, who will not ratifie a wrong ſentence, but will increaſe their Reward, for having bravely ſuffer'd in his Cauſe.

Queſt. By what you have ſaid, I ſee how God forgives Sins. But when they are committed againſt us, *we* are bid to *forgive them*

too,

too, and that, as we our ſelves hope to be forgiven. I pray you what doth that imply?

Anſw. Not our remitting Future puniſhments, which lye at God's mercy, not in ours. Nor always that we ſit ſtill, without offering to defend our ſelves, when we are aſſaulted; or to ſeek redreſs, when we are injured. But only that we bear no malice to them in our hearts, and if the caſe require Redreſs, that we ſeek it not in Spiteful ways, and that, beſide the Reparation of our own Wrong, we aim not at our Adverſary's Prejudice, nor ſeek his hurt afterwards, nor Pray to God, or to the *Magiſtrate* for vengeance, as the *Jews* might to eaſe an angry mind, when we are able to do no more againſt him our ſelves.

Queſt. What uſe muſt we make of this Belief, of the *Forgiveneſs of Sins*?

Anſw. Admire the mercy of God, who can forgive ſuch Profligate, and Provoking Offenders. And the wonderful love of *Jeſus Chriſt*, who could dye to procure this Forgiveneſs, for his utter Enemies. And not deſpair of mercy, but ſtedfaſtly hope there is place of Pardon after any of our ſins. And above all, to ſhew true Repentance, and forgive others, and perform all thoſe things, which are the condition and Terms of Forgiveneſs, thereby to ſecure it to our ſelves.

Queſt. And when we are once forgiven, may we embolden our ſelves, from God's readineſs

readineſs to forgive, to *Repeat* our ſins?

Anſw. No, by no means. *Shall we continue in Sin, that Grace may abound in pardoning? God forbid*, Rom. 6. 1,2. *Now thou art made whole, ſin no more, leſt a worſe thing come upon thee*, ſaid our *Saviour*, Joh. 5. 14. Such ingratitude, and abuſe of Grace, is not only moſt provoking to the Spirit, and tempts him to withdraw from us: and calls down from God heavier, and ſurer Puniſhments: But alſo it brings in force againſt us all the old ſcores, which were all ſtruck off, as I ſaid, only on preſumption of our Perſeverance in repenting of them.

CHAP. XI.

Of the Reſurrection of the Body, and the Life everlaſting.

The Contents.

The Reſurrection not meerly of our Spirits from ſin, but of our Bodies from the Grave. This to be brought about by the Almighty Power of God. The Perfections of Gloriſied Bodies, viz. *Immortality, Spirituality, and Glory. The Bodies of the Wicked Immortal. And exquiſitely ſenſible. Some Inferences from the Reſurrection of our Bodies. Good Souls carried ſtraight-way into a Place of Bliſs. Of Eternal Life, wherin there is Full and unmixed Happineſs. Of the ſatisfaction of*

of their Senſes. Their clear and diſtinct Knowledge. Perfect Holineſs. And without Reluctance. Bliſsful Companions. Perfection of Love and Kindneſs. Honour, and Eminence of Place. All theſe to be injoy'd in the Higheſt Heavens, without ſatiety, or wearineſs. For evermore. Of the miſeries of the Damned, in Tormenting Paſſions. The worm of Conſcience. Fire and Flames. Diſgrace. Under all which, no favour of God. No company, but of Tormenting Devils, and damned Spirits. None to condole, when they cannot relieve. No reſt and ſleep, for Recruit of Spirits. No end of their miſeries. The Uſe of this.

Queſt. WHat is the *Eleventh* Article of the *Creed?*

Anſw. I believe the *Reſurrection of the Body.*

Queſt. May not the Reſurrection be interpreted, only of a *Spiritual* Reſurrection from ſin?

Anſw. So ſome taught of old, as St. *Paul* teſtifies, *ſaying the Reſurrection is paſſed already*, i. e. when Men roſe from a State of ſin, to the fear of God; and theſe, ſays he, get credit, and *overthrow the Faith of ſome*, 2 Tim. 2. 18. But the Reſurrection we expect, is a *Reſurrection of the Body.* Our Bodies, after we have laid them down by Death, ſhall at the Day of Judgment, be quickned, and raiſed up again. Then, *all that are in the Graves ſhall hear Chriſt's voice,*

and come forth, they that have done good, to the Reſurrection of Life, and they that have done evil, to the Reſurrection of Damnation, Joh. 5. 28, 29. *This mortal* Body *muſt put on immortality, and this corruptible muſt put on Incorruption,* that ſo all that being revived, which Death deſtroyed, *Death may be ſwallowed up in Victory,* 1 Cor. 15. 53, 54.

Queſt. The Reſurrection of a Body which had been crumbled into Duſt, ſeemed an incredible thing when it was preach'd at firſt: *When* the Philoſophers *heard of a Reſurrection, ſome mocked,* Act. 17. 32. What can make it credible, or fit to be Believed?

Anſw. The Omnipotent Power of God, when that is ingaged for it. For no one can think it impoſſible, for God to raiſe up a Body out of duſt, that at firſt made it out of duſt, yea, that raiſed all things out of nothing. *Ye err,* ſaith our Saviour to the *Sadduces,* about the Reſurrection, *not knowing the Power of God,* Mat. 22. 29. And this Power, he has given us a ſenſible proof of; by raiſing up *Chriſt. If Chriſt be preached, that he roſe from the dead, how ſay ſome among you, that there is no Reſurrection of the Dead*; i. e. in regard his Riſing is ſuch an irrefragable inſtance, and example of it? 1 Cor. 15. 12.

Queſt. Shall the Bodies of the Saints, be raiſed up by the Power of the *Holy Ghoſt*?

Anſw. Yes; he that now makes them his *Temples,* by diſplaying in them his *Holineſs,* ſhall at laſt diſplay in them his *Omnipotence,* breathing

breathing into their ſcatter'd duſt the Breath of Life, as at firſt he breathed Life into all things. *If the Spirit of him that raiſed up Jeſus from the Dead, dwell in you, he ſhall* at laſt *alſo quicken your mortal Bodies*, as he quickned his, *Rom.* 8. 11.

Queſt. The Riſing of the *Saints*, will no doubt be very Glorious. But what Perfections ſhall their *Bodies* receive at the Reſurrection?

Anſw. Firſt, Immortality. Nothing after that ſhall ever be able to pain, decay, or annoy them; they ſhall not be liable to ſuffer, nor to dye any more. *This corruptible muſt put on incorruption; and this mortal muſt put on immortality*, 1 Cor. 15. 53. *They cannot dye any more*, Luke 20. 36.

Secondly, Spirituality; it is ſown a Natural Body, it is raiſed a Spiritual Body, 1 Cor. 15. 44. Whereby is not meant, that it ſhall be a *Spirit* in *Subſtance*; but that it ſhall have thoſe *Perfections of Spirits*, wherein they excel Bodies. As, 1. being *above the groſs Pleaſures of Senſe*, ſuch as Eating, Drinking, and carnal Injoyments. *In the Reſurrection, they neither Marry, nor are given in Marriage, but are as the Angels*, Mat. 22. 30. And *Meats for the Belly, and the Belly for Meats, but God ſhall ſhortly deſtroy both it, and them*, viz. in the Reſurrection, when men ſhall live without them, 1 *Cor.* 6. 13. 2*dly. Vigor* and *Activity*, ſuch as may anſwer and keep pace with the vehement Tranſports, and quick Emotions of Glorified Souls, and be capa-

ble to ſupport their Joys, bear their Raptures, and expreſs their Activities. And 3*dly*, *Agility*, or *Spritelineſs* in their motions, moveing towards all Points, upwards † 1 *Theſſ.* 4. 17. † *into the Air and Clouds*, as St. *Paul* notes of the Saints in their new Bodies; as well as downwards: And to Places at any diſtance, with the quickneſs of Spirits; whence they are able in a moment to appear, or diſappear as the Soul pleaſes, as our *Saviour's Body* did after his *Reſurrection*, and †Phil. 3. 21 † *our raiſed Bodies* muſt be *like his*, being in this reſpect alſo *equal to the Angels*, Luke 20. 36.

Queſt. Shall they receive any more Perfections?

Anſw. Yes, *Thirdly*, not only a perfect Beauty, inſtead of any Miſhape or Deformity, but alſo a marvellous *Brightneſs*, or *Glory*. *It is ſown in Diſhonour, but it is raiſed in Glory*, 1 Cor. 15. 43. *The Righteous ſhall ſhine forth as the Sun, in the Kingdom of the Father*, Mat. 13. 43. *Chriſt ſhall change our vile Body, that it may be like unto his Glorious Body*, Phil. 3. 21. And that was full of glittering Splendor. Whilſt he converſed with his *Diſciples*, after his Reſurrection here on Earth, he laid it aſide, becauſe fleſhly eyes were not able to behold it, as appeared by its *Striking Saul blind*, Acts 9. 3, 9. But in Heaven he ſhines with a dazeling Luſtre. Thus he appeared from thence, *to Stephen*, Acts 7. 55. and to *Paul*, who deſcribes the light of his Preſence to have

have been *above the brightneſs of the Sun*, Acts 26. 13. And *his head, and his hairs were white like Wooll*, yea, *as white as Snow, his Eyes as a Flame of Fire, his Feet like fine Braſs burning in a Furnace, and his Countenance as the Sun, ſhining in its ſtrength*, in that Viſion St. *John* had of him in the *Revelations*, Rev. 1. 13, 14, 15, 16.

Queſt. This will be a moſt happy Reſurrection of the *Juſt*: But what kind of Bodies ſhall the Wicked have? ſhall theirs be immortal too?

Anſw. Yes; but to their coſt, and for no other end, but that they may be immortally puniſhed. For when they always fry in Eternal Fire, they ſhall never be conſumed by it.

Queſt. And ſhall their raiſed Bodies be ſenſible of Torment?

Anſw. Yes; far more than their Bodies are now; and they ſhall always have the ſmarteſt, and moſt terrible things in Nature to Torment them, viz. *Eternal Fire. Depart from me ye Curſed into everlaſting Fire*, Mat. 25. 41. There they ſhall be *tormented in the Flames*, and not have ſo much, as a *drop of Water, to cool their* parched *Tongue*, Luke 16. 23, 24.

Queſt. If it be thus extream violent, it will ſoon conſume them, or, as extremity of pain ſometimes cauſes diſtraction, ſo over-power their Souls, that they ſhall not be able to mind, or attend to it?

Anſw. No; as their ſenſe of pains ſhall

be moſt exquiſite, and inſenſible, ſo ſhall their Bodies be indiſſoluble, and their ſenſe inſuperable. As an Almighty Vengeance ſhall ever inflict the moſt tormenting ſtrokes upon them: ſo at the ſame time, an Almighty Power ſhall continue their ſtrength to bear, and an exquiſite ſenſe or feeling, to be moſt piercingly affected with them.

Queſt. Muſt not this Belief of the *Reſurrection of the Body*, comfort us upon the *death of Friends*, when we lay their Bodies in the Graves?

Anſw. Yes; becauſe thoſe Bodies are not periſhed, but only faln aſleep, and ſhall be infinitely more perfect, and glorious, and full of ſtrength, when they awake out of it. *I would not have you ignorant, Brethren, concerning them that are aſleep, that ye ſorrow not even as others which have no hope. For if we believe, that Jeſus dyed, and roſe again: even ſo them alſo, that ſleep in Jeſus, will God bring with him,* 1 Theſſ. 4. 13, 14.

Queſt. And ought it not to arm us againſt the fear of our own death too?

Anſw. Yes; for ſince, *when our earthly Houſe of this Tabernacle is diſſolved, we have a Building of God, Eternal in the Heavens: in this we groan earneſtly, deſiring to be cloath'd upon, with our Houſe which is from Heaven,* 2 Cor. 5. 1, 2.

Queſt. What is the *Twelfth*, and laſt Article of the *Creed*?

Anſw. I *Believe the Life Everlaſting.*

Queſt.

Quest. When good mens Souls leave their Bodies, what becomes of them?

Answ. They are carried into a place of Bliss and Refreshment, which *Christ*, in his discourse to the *Penitent Thief*, called † *Paradise*; and in the *Parable* of *Dives* and *Lazarus*, * *Abrahams Bosom.* And the care of conducting them thither, as *Christ* noted in the account of *Lazarus*, is committed to some good Angels. For some of these, as ministring Spirits, always attend the death-beds of God's Saints, and receive the departed Soul into their care; to guard it from all frights and molestations of envious Fiends, as it passes thro' the *Regions of the Air*, which are the † *Principality* or Territory *of the Powers of Darkness*; and to guide it in all that long passage, of new and unknown ways, which lead to the Blessed Receptacles of departed Spirits. Whereas the Souls of the Wicked, when they are thrust out of their Bodies, are left naked and defenceless, to be seiz'd by those greedy and implacable Furies, and hurried away upon the award of their most just Judge, in extream anguish and despair, to their most wretched Prisons.

† *Luke* 23. 43.

* *Luke* 16. 22.

† *Eph* 2.2.

Quest. But at the Resurrection, I see both Good and Bad shall return to their Bodies again. And shall that Life last for ever?

Answ. Yes; for after once they are reunited, their Souls and Bodies shall never part any more; but the good shall continue

in everlasting pleasure, and the wicked in everlasting pain.

Quest. What happiness is there, in that Eternal Life of the Righteous?

Answ. All possible happiness their hearts can wish, or their Nature is capable of. They shall see and enjoy God, who will give himself to them: and that implies every thing that is Beatifying, all the Blessedness we can imagine, and infinitely more, being contain'd in God, and communicated together with him.

Quest. And shall this Blessedness never be imbitter'd to them, with any care, or fear, or grief, or crosses, as all the happyness of this present Life is?

Answ. No; *They shall neither hunger, nor thirst any more*, Rev. 7. 16. *God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more Death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor Pain, for* all those *former things are passed away*, Rev. 21. 4.

Quest. Shall all their *Senses* be gratified with the most delightful, and agreeable enjoyments?

Answ. Yes; such as the *Scripture* is wont to set off by *Feasts*, and *Banquets*, and *Marriage-Entertainments*; by melodious Songs, and joyful *Hallelujahs*; by transporting sights of all the Beauty, the Glory, and Magnificence of the Heavenly Court; the Majesty of God's Throne, and the Splendor of all the Heavenly Host that do surround it. Indeed, their exalted and refined

ned Senſes, are above the groſs delights of Eating, and Drinking, and giving in Marriage. But ſuch as theſe the *Scripture* uſes, becauſe our preſent ſtate places ſo much in them. And whatſoever delight, and ſatisfaction, they may expreſs to our preſent Capacities; that, and abundance more, ſhall the enjoyments of that life yield to our glorified and improved Bodies.

Queſt. 'Tis a great happineſs, to have *clear*, and *diſtinct knowledge* of things, and not to be diſtracted with doubts, or poſed with difficulties. Shall the Righteous in that Eternal Life, have ſuch clear and advanced *underſtandings?*

Anſw. Yes; they ſhall get rid of all darkneſs, and doubtfulneſs of mind, and know every thing they deſire, without ſtudy, or pains. *Now we ſee as in a Glaſs, darkly, but then face to face: Now we know in part, but then ſhall we know, even as alſo we are known,* 1 Cor. 13. 12.

Queſt. 'Tis a ſingular Point of Bliſs, to be perfect in *Holineſs*, which is one of the moſt Bliſsful Attributes of God himſelf. Shall they alſo be ſuch perfectly Holy Perſons?

Anſw. Yes; they ſhall excel in every Virtue, and Grace, wherein *Chriſt* himſelf doth: for *when he appears, we ſhall be like him,* 1 Joh. 3. 2. And thoſe they ſhall enjoy, free of all thoſe weakneſſes and defects, whereby their Virtues are obſcur'd, and leſſen'd in this World. For *in new Jeruſalem,*

rusalem, the Spirits of just men are made perfect, Heb. 12. 23.

Quest. And shall they exercise all this Holiness *without trouble* and *reluctance*, which makes the practice of it painful here on Earth?

Answ. Yes; for they shall neither have any inward Lusts to oppose it, nor outward Temptations to draw them from it. They hear no advice, nor see any example, but of what is good. Their inclinations are all rectified, and become Holiness to the Lord. Their Nature is perfect in good, and duty is become their delight, so that in conforming entirely to the will of God, they do in the highest measure gratifie their own wills too.

Quest. And with this height of knowledge, and of Holiness, shall they also be *inwardly pleased in their own minds*, and think themselves happy; without which, no man is happy?

Answ. Yes; they must needs be infinitely pleased in every thing they have, and in every thing they do, for whatsoever comes to them, is pure happiness; and whatsoever proceeds from them, is full of Wisdom and Goodness, without the least word, or action, to repent of. Their State is all Joy, and Peace: *enter thou into the joy of thy Lord*, Mat. 25. 21. It is not bid to enter into them, being infinitely more than they can hold; but they into it, as into a vast Ocean of Bliss, whereof they shall always

always drink to the full, but never empty or exhauſt it.

Queſt. Indeed, ſuch compleat Knowledge, and perfect Holineſs, muſt needs give them cauſe of greateſt ſatisfaction from themſelves. But what ſort of *Company* muſt they keep? will they be equally happy in that too?

Anſw. Yes; unimaginably happy. For they will live always in the preſence of God, who will ineffably Communicate himſelf to them; and of *Jeſus Chriſt*, who will infinitely rejoyce to ſee how happy he has made them; and of the *Holy Ghoſt*, who will eternally Congratulate the reward of his own Graces in them; and converſe with *Angels*, *Apoſtles*, and *Glorified Saints*, and all their Godly dear Friends, whom they valued as their own Souls, and whom they clave ſo faſt to in their hearts, that they could have followed them into the other World, when they were taken from them.

Queſt. And all this God-like Society, are every way fitted to be the moſt happy, and delightful Companions?

Anſw. Yes; to be the moſt Bliſsful, that poſſibly can be thought of. For they are all light, and quickneſs in their underſtandings; and all love, and tenderneſs in their Affections; and moſt ſweet, and obliging in their carriage, being perfectly free from all Anger, Croſſneſs, Scorn, or Contempt, and every thing that may give offence. They all look pleaſed, and invi-

ting in their countenances; and are exquiſitely wiſe, uſeful, and entertaining in all their Diſcourſes; and all agree in the ſame Opinions, and ſpeak the ſame things, and purſue the ſame ends, and are pleaſed in the ſame Objects, and have no ſtrife among them, but who ſhall love higheſt, and oblige moſt, and be moſt like to God, and agreeable to each other for evermore.

Queſt. You ſay there ſhall be no ſtrife, but who ſhall love moſt. Indeed, a ſtate of love, which is not cooled by any unkindneſſes, nor croſſed by Diſappointments, nor made unfortunate by the Follies, or Sufferings of thoſe we dearly love, is abſolutely the moſt agreeable, pleaſant, and ſatisfactory Employment in the World. And amidſt all theſe Companions, ſhall the Righteous be Perfect in this *Love?*

Anſw. Yes, moſt Perfect. *For God is Love, and he that dwells in God, dwells in Love,* 1 Joh. 4. 16.

Queſt. Will all that bleſſed Company entirely love us?

Anſw. Yes, as they do their own Souls; they were full of Love, while they lived here; loving even their Enemies, after *Chriſt*'s Precept, and Example; but eſpecially the ſervants of God, in whom they diſcern'd his Image. But in Heaven they ſhall love us in Perfection, and be full Ripe and Compleat in this, as they are in all other Graces.

Queſt. And ſhall we entirely Love all them?

Anſw.

Answ. Yes; they shall all be so absolute in all amiable excellencies, and continually discover such a boundless Love for us, and our Natures will be so wholly framed for Love and Kindness; that we cannot chuse but love them, and that with the greatest fervour, and intenseness of Affection. And this will be all Pleasure, and no Pain, because they are incapable of doing any thing, that may either shame, or disgust us. God is all in all in them, and therefore they can do nothing, but what we, who entirely love God and them, may perfectly delight in.

Quest. If we shall have such entire Love for all the Saints in Bliss, we shall, as all true Friends do, partake in all their Joys, and all their Happiness will be ours?

Answ. It will be so; for Love of Happy Persons, multiplies Happiness, as oft as it multiplies Objects. Because, when we entirely love them, we esteem and are pleased with all their Happiness, as with our own. And this way, every Saint will be as full, as if they had a Monopoly of Bliss, and draw all the Happiness of Heaven to themselves.

Quest. But amidst all these inward excellencies, and happy Company, and Blissful intercourse of kindness, shall they live in *Honour*, and be *eminent in Place*?

Answ. Yes, as *Kings* and *Princes*. They shall † *Sit on Thrones*, and wear * *Crowns* and *Scepters*, and be † *Sons of God*, and *Brethren*, † *Rev.* 3. 21. * 1 *Pet.* 5. 4. † 1 *Jo.* 3. 1

* *Rom.* 8. 17. † *Rev.* 21. 7. *thren*, and * *Joint-heirs* with *Christ*, they *shall* † *inherit all things*, and not only have the Priviledge to stand about *Christs* Throne, but what would surpass belief, if Truth it self had not assured us of it, sit down with him thereon. *To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my Throne; even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne*, Rev. 3. 21. And besides this glory of their State, and eminence in Place; their Bodies, as I observed, shall be cloathed with the most Radiant Light, and surpass even the Sun it self in Brightness.

Quest. In what place must they live, to wear these Glories, and Feast on all this immense Happiness?

Answ. In the *Heaven of Heavens*, a Place * *Eph.* 4. 10. situate on High, † *far above all visible things*, unspeakably vast in extent, and magnificent in structure, and illustrious in Glory, the Presence Chamber of the great God, and King; where he lives incircled † 1 *Tim.* 6. 16. with Lustre, and † *Light inaccessible*, which no mortal Eye *can approach unto*, for *no Man*, (as he told *Moses*,) *can see my Face and live*, Exod. 33. 20. Here shall all Righteous Persons, with their immortal Eyes, ever see God, and shine in his Glory, and feast on all the forecited joys, and fulness of *Pleasure*, *which is at his Right hand for evermore*, Psal. 16. 11.

Quest. But if this happy enjoyment last long, will they not *grow weary* of it in the end;

end; since humane Appetites are wont to love change, and loath the best things, if held constant to them?

Answ. No; as the enjoyments are, so is the desire and relish of them, always the same. The Goods are pure, having no ungrateful mixtures to be discover'd, and tasted by time: and the Appetite and Relish perfect, subject to no ebbs or flows, no wearinesse or alterations. So that we shall still desire, as well as enjoy these pleasant things, and find an inexpressible sweetness, and satisfaction in them.

Quest. And to Crown all, and render us secure in this Blessed State, shall the happiness of it be no fading transitory Thing, as all worldly pleasure is, but *everlasting*?

Answ. Yes; it will be always in its Spring, and look fresh, and flourish, thro' Eternal Ages. *The Pleasures at God's Right Hand, are for evermore*, Ps. 16. 11. *the weight of Glory* is *Eternal*, 2 Cor. 4. 17. *the Kingdom cannot be moved*, Heb. 12. 28. the *Crown is incorruptible*, 1 Cor. 9. 25. *that fadeth not away*, 1 Pet. 5. 4. 'Tis not a limited happiness, held only for a term of years, or Ages, but an *Eternal Life*, 1 John. 5. 11.

Quest. This is such a perfection of Bliss, as is enough to make all Righteous men impatient of living here, and *long to dye*, as † St. *Paul* did, thereby to be possess'd of it? † *Phil.* 1. 21, 23.

Answ. It is so, indeed, if it contain'd no more

more than I have described. But when they come to enjoy it, they will find infinitely more than I have said, yea, than any Tongue can express, or heart imagine and apprehend. For *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath* it *enter'd into the heart of man*, to conceive *the Things God has prepared for those that love him*, 1 Cor. 2. 9.

Quest. I perceive, how Blissful the Eternal Life of the Righteous is. But the Wicked too shall be raised to an Eternal State, and what shall their Life be?

Answ. The most *perfect misery*, both of *Body* and *Soul*, whence in *Scripture*, when by *Life* is meant, not only the *continuance in being*, but the *happiness* of it, their state is call'd *everlasting death*, 2 Thes. 1. 8, 9. Rev. 2. 11.

Quest. What sorrow and torment shall the Wicked for ever endure in their *Souls*?

Answ. The torment of all *vexatious Passions*, being continually wracked with Envy, Anger, Fruitless Cares, and Boundless Fears, utter despair of all relief, and yet extream desires of it. And the *Sting of Conscience*, which shall pierce them thro' with bitter remorse, and gnaw perpetually like a *Worm*, upon their Hearts and Vitals, *their Worm dieth not*, Mark 9. 44.

Quest. Indeed, all these mention'd Passions, when at the heighth, are so many Furies, especially *distracting* and *amazing Fears*, and *Horrors*. And shall wretched Souls be wholly seized by these? *Answ.*

Answ. Yes; as much as we may imagine they can possibly, who are surrounded on every side with the most mischievous and spiteful Enemies, and are left among them in the *Dark*, which, were it possible, would magnify their Fears by fancy, and make them infinite. To express which utter uncomfortableness, and insecurity, they are said *to be cast into utter Darkness*, Mat. 22. 13. and *reserved unto Blackness of Darkness for ever*, 2 Pet. 2. 17.

Quest. What is implyed in the *Worm of Conscience*?

Answ. Bitter, and cutting remorse, for their own wretched folly, which has call'd down upon them those intolerable miseries, and utter and horrid despair, of ever removing or abating them.

Quest. Is this *Sting of Conscience* so extreamly tormenting to mens Souls, that it should be compared to a *Worm*, preying upon their vitals?

Answ. Yes; for they who feel it, and such only can tell the smart of it, think it more exquisite and insupportable, than the pangs of death it self. And therefore they run greedily after Death, and seek by any means to make away themselves, in hopes thereby to get quit of it. *The Spirit of a man will sustain all other his infirmities, but a wounded Spirit who can bear?* Prov. 18. 14. And if 'tis so intolerable here, where they have only some beginnings, and small fore-tastes of it: what must it be,

when horror is at the heighth, and despair and anguish is consummate, and the rage of all infernal Spirits is let loose, to represent at full the most formidable Phantasms, and imprint Anguish, and all sorts of Agonies and painful Horrors, with the utmost activity of Furious and powerful Spirits, as it will be in the next World.

Quest. But whilst their forlorn Souls are racked with all these horrible pangs, what shall become of their *Bodies?*

Answ. They shall *Frye in Flames*, as I said, and endure all the Torment, which men can feel in the *hotteſt Fire. They ſhall be caſt into a Furnace of Fire*, Mat. 13. 42. and *have their part in the Lake, which burneth with Fire and Brimſtone, which is the ſecond death*, Rev. 21. 8.

Queſt. This must needs cause excessive pain. But shall they not have something to mitigate, and make it easier?

Answ. No; not so much as a *drop of water to cool their Tongue*, when 'tis parched and *tormented in the Flame*, Luke 16. 24. Nor, that poor relief of those, who are extream weary, and sore, to shift sides, or change their posture. *Bind him hand and foot*, that he cannot stir, says our *Lord*, when he Condemns the Sinner to this *Lake of Fire*, Mat. 22. 13.

Queſt. And shall *deſperate ſhame*, and *diſgrace*, be added to all this?

Answ. Yes; For they are all as vile and hateful, to God, and all good men, yea, and

and to themſelves too, as they can be made; and it is purely their own wilful and wretched Folly, and deſperate wickedneſs, which has brought them to it.

Queſt. But will not God, the hope and comfort of all that are in utter diſtreſs, look upon them, and ſhew them countenance, in this wretched ſtate?

Anſw. No; they ſhall never ſee his face, nor receive the leaſt glimpſe of favour from his Countenance. *He will ſay to them, depart from me ye Curſed*, Mat. 25. 41. And *they ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction, from the Preſence of the Lord*, 2 Theſ. 1. 9. He will not look upon them, but in wrath and fury, and never think of them in mercy any more.

Queſt. But when God deſerts them, ſhall they be quite forſaken? or, will they not be allowed ſome *Company* in this diſtreſs?

Anſw. Yes; but that ſhall be the *Company of Devils*, and *tormenting Spirits*, who thirſt more after Blood, than ever the moſt ſtarved Appetite did after food: and who have no other way, to eaſe their own pains, but by the ſatisfaction of augmenting theirs. *Go into everlaſting Fire, prepared for the Devil, and his Angels*, Mat. 25. 41.

Queſt. But amidſt all this horrid Crew, that take ſuch pleaſure to deſpite them, ſhall there be none to help them, when they are unable to help themſelves, at leaſt to *pity*, and *condole* with them?

Anſw. No, there are none, but Partners

in destruction, who are all too full of their own miseries, to attend theirs. And all these in Nature are perfect Furies, that have no love and tenderness for others. For Hell is no place for pity and kindness: since *he that dwells in Love, dwells in God*, as St. *John* says, 1 *Joh.* 4. 16. So that there they shall have no Friend, either to help, or hearten, or sympathize with them. But all about them shall spitefully vex and reproach them, and add more to their burden, which is already heavier, by far, than they can bear.

Quest. But there is one thing still, that, in the extreamest Torments, gives some ease and recruit of Spirits, tho' it cannot give a full deliverance, and that is *Rest* and *Sleep*. And shall not miserable wretches have some rest from these Torments?

Answ. No; for *the smoke of their Torment ascendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest, day nor night*, Rev. 14. 11.

Quest. But if this Torment, be thus without all intermission, and thus violent, sure it will not *last long*, but they will come in good time to an end of it?

Answ. No, it shall never end. Their Bodies, as I noted, shall be made indissoluble, and immortal, only that their pains may be immortal. *Their worm dieth not, and their Fire never shall be quenched*, Mark 9. 43, 44.

Quest. Good God! how intolerable, and irremediable is this State? will not every man

man, that believes he shall unavoidably suffer all this for persisting wicked, take any pains, and endure any hardships in Religion, and the amendment of his Life, to prevent it?

Answ. Yes; most certainly, and this is the wise use we are to make of it. *Knowing the Terrors of the Lord*, in executing the Wicked after the last Judgment, *we persuade men* to live well here, without which there is no avoiding them, 2 *Cor.* 5. 11.

Quest. And since the happiness of the Righteous, is so infinitely lasting, and large; must not the belief of that, make us contemn all the short pleasures of Sin, which would bereave us of it; and think all the sufferings of Virtue, nothing in comparison of the reward, that doth attend it?

Answ. Yes; for since *the sufferings of this present Time, are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that shall be revealed in us: neither Death, nor Life, nor Things present, nor Things to come, nor any other Creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*, Rom. 8. 18, 38, 39.

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